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THE

AGAMEMNON

OF

AESCHYLUS

TRANSLATED BY

WALTER HEADLAM, Litt.D.

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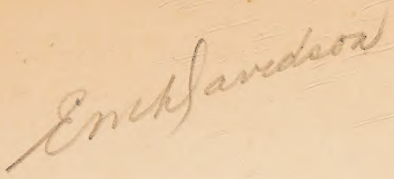

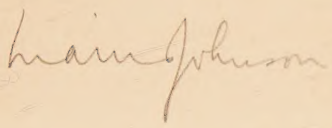

THE AGAMEMNON OF ÆSCHYLUS

THE PLAYS OF ÆSCHYLUS

TRANSLATED FROM A REVISED TEXT BY

WALTER HEADLAM, LITT.D.,

FELLOW OF KING'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

THE AGAMEMNON

LONDON

GEORGE BELL & SONS

1904

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PREFATORY NOTE

THE best texts represent the light of twenty years ago; and I hope it will be thought that the last twenty years have done much both for the text and the interpretation of the *Agamemnon*. Whenever they are likely to be unfamiliar, the readings adopted are given in the margin; and references to the *Classical Review*, which scholars can easily consult, have often enabled me to dispense with arguments in favour of them: but in a book of this kind it was not convenient, and did not seem necessary, always to record the names of their discoverers. Wecklein's Appendices give a complete record up to 1893; and in the case of anything more recent the author's name, when it is not my own, is mentioned.

March 1904.

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THE AGAMEMNON

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

AGAMEMNON, King of Argos ; son of Atreus.

CLYTEMNESTRA, his wife.

CASSANDRA, daughter of King Priam.

AEGISTHUS, son of Thyestes, and cousin of Agamemnon, against whom he has a blood-feud ; paramour of Clytemnestra.

WATCHMAN.

HERALD OF AGAMEMNON.

CHORUS OF ARGIVE ELDERS.

THE AGAMEMNON.

Scene: *The palace of Agamemnon at Argos.*

Time: *Night in the first scene; in the second* (*v.* 266 sqq.), *dawn.*

The watchman is discovered on the flat roof of the palace. During the tenth year of the war, in which it had been prophesied that Troy should fall, he had been set to watch for the beacon to be passed from Troy by Agamemnon as the sign of victory. It is now about the setting of the Pleiads (*v.* 817), *which marked the winter or storm-season* (χειμών, χεῖμα, *v.* 5).

Watchman. Heaven have I been beseeching for release from this weary task throughout the space of a whole year's watch; in which, while couched upon the Atreidae's roof dog-fashion on my arms, I have become familiar with the general gathering of the stars by night, and chief those splendid potentates pre-eminent in the sky, the great stars[1] that bring winter and summer upon earth—the seasons of their waning and the risings of them.

And so now am I watching for the torch-signal, a blaze of fire bringing a tale from Troy and tidings of her capture

[1] The constellations δυνάστας is an astrological word.

—for so a woman's heart with masculine counsel is deter- 10
mined to expect.[1]

But while I pass my resting-time abroad by night and open to the dews—not visited by dreams, this couch of mine, for in place of Sleep stands Fear beside me to prevent me from closing eyelids fast—but when by way of an antidote compounded against sleep, I have a mind to sing or hum a tune, then does my voice break to sighing and moaning for the sad case of this house, being no longer managed excellently as heretofore.—But now at last may 20
the fire shine out with good tidings in the gloom and a happy release from my labours come to pass!

(*The beacon presently appears upon the Arachnaean Hill.*)

O hail, thou blessed lantern! showing forth a light of day by night and signal for the setting-up of many a choral dance in Argos for this great event. Oho! Oho! [*calling to Clytemnestra, whose cry of triumph is heard presently*]. To Agamemnon's queen I'll give plain token to arise up from her couch with all speed and lift up her voice within in joyful cries of blessing on this blazing torch—supposing Troy be taken indeed, as is the manifest message of the 30
beacon!—I'll lead off myself with a dance upon my own account, for I shall profit by my master's lucky throw, this beaconing having turned up treble six for me! [*Here he dances, which implies an interval, during which Clytemnestra sends round orders for a general sacrifice and summons the Elders.*] Ah well, God send at least the master of the house may come again, and I may clasp in mine his friendly hand. I say no more—there is a great ox treading on my tongue: but the house itself, could it find a voice,

[1] ὧδε γὰρ κρατεῖ . . . . ἐλπίζειν for ἐλπίζων. *Class. Rev.* 1900, p. 200.

might tell a very plain tale. I choose, for my part, to keep words for the informed, and for the uninformed to have no memory. [*Exit.*

(*Enter chorus of the* ELDERS.)

Chorus. This is now the tenth year, since Priam's powerful adversary, Prince Menelaus, and withal Prince Agamemnon—sons of Atreus both, fast-coupled in joint rank of throne and sceptre by the grace of God—put forth from this land with an army of Argives, raised for their service in the field, that filled a thousand ships: and loud they uttered harsh and passionate cries of War, as eagles do, that in remote anguish for lofty-nested children[1] wheel and turn continually on rowing pinions, having lost those bedded young whose watching was their care.

But one above—Apollo, it may be, or Pan or Zeus—hearing in sore complaint the shrill bird-clamour of those denizens within his region, sends, to punish by and bye, his Vengeance on the trespassers.

So against Alexander by a stronger power are sent the sons of Atreus—by Zeus Hospitable, in the cause of a woman shared by many men meaning to lay struggles many and weary, where the knee is pressed down in the dust and the spear-shaft snapped asunder first,[2] on Trojan and on Greek alike:—the matter is where now it is, and will be ended at the end appointed: with sacrifice

[1] ἄλγεσι παίδων ὑπατηλεχέων. *Class. Rev.* 1900, p. 113; 1902, p. 436.

[2] Before the issue is decided. προτέλεια, being especially ceremonies previous to the consummation of marriage, was metaphorically used for *preliminary* to the completion, perfection, accomplishment of anything—of a voyage in *v.* 237, of mature age in *v.* 721, and often in later authors.

unburnt, neither by oils poured over nor by fire lit under shall temper resolute be softened.[1]

But we, by reason of aged flesh defaulting, were omitted from that muster, and remain at home, supporting upon staves a strength that is but as a child's. For as the marrow, that holds sway within the breast,[2] being youthful is but as old age, and Ares is missing from his place; so Eld extreme, what is it, when the green leaf is now turning to the dry? Though he walks abroad with gait three-footed, yet doth he wander as he were a dream beheld by day, no better than a child.

But thou O daughter of Tyndareus, queen Clytemnestra, what occasion now, what stir? what new intelligence, receipt of what advice hath caused thee to set incense burning by messages sent round? The altars of all gods about the town, supreme, infernal, gods of doors[3] and gods of public places, are ablaze with gifts; and at this point and at that to heaven a flame arises, medicined with soft and innocent beguilements of pure unguent—paste royal from the inner store. Hereof reveal to us what is fit and possible to tell, and so bring healing for this anxiety, which now doth sometime prove malignant, and anon from the sacrifices Hope shines out with kindly ray and removes the eating care that preys upon my mind.[4]

[1] οὔθ' ὑποκαίων οὔτ' ἐπιλείβων
ἀπύρων ἱερῶν
ὀργὰς ἀτενεῖς παραθέλξει.

The phrase is purposely designed to bear two senses, 'the stubborn mood of sacrifices that refuse to burn,' and 'fixed wrath for unburnt-sacrifice,' wrath for the sacrifice of Iphigeneia.

[2] *Class. Rev.* 1902, p. 438, Plin. *N.H.* xi. 37, 67.

[3] τῶν τε θυραίων.

[4] τότε δ' ἐκ θυσιῶν τὴν θυμοβόρον
φροντίδ' ἄπληστον
φαίνουσ' ἀγάν' ἐλπὶς ἀμύνει.

The words, I think, were transposed to show the construction, and

The auspicious sign of victory that men of prime[1] received upon their road I am entitled to rehearse—for still the age with which my life is knit inspires me by divine grace with the impulse, valiancy for song[2]—how the twin-throned command of the allies, one-minded captaincy of the youth of Hellas, were sped with arm and spear avenging against the land of Teucros by a doughty feathered omen—king of birds to kings of ships appearing—both the black one and that white behind—hard by the royal pavilion, on the spear-hand side, in conspicuous station, feeding on a breed of hares in teeming multitude, all prevented from their final course.[3]

Let *Sorrow, Sorrow*, be the burden, but may good prevail!

The trusty army-prophet, seeing the twain warrior sons of Atreus two in spirit,[4] perceived as *hare-feasters* the conducting leaders, and thus declared his interpretation: "In course of time this expedition makes a prey of Priam's town; when all the general common herd before the walls by portion due shall be brought low perforce:—only let no divine displeasure overcloud fore-smitten the great bit for Troy's mouth in the field of war; for yet

τὴν θυμοφθόρον λύπης φρένα was an explanation of τὴν θυμοβόρον φροντίδα.

[1] ἐκτελέων, which, however, would be more naturally contrasted with immaturity than with the aged Elders' own decay. ἐντελέων would be 'men in power.'

[2] ἔτι γὰρ θεόθεν καταπνεύει
πειθώ, μολπᾶν
ἀλκάν, σύμφυτος αἰών.

Possibly πειθώ should be πειθοῖ, 'inspires me by divine impulse with puissance in song.'

[3] βοσκόμενοι λαγίναν, ἐρικύματα φέρματα, γένναν,
βλαβέντα λοισθίων δρόμων.

Class. Rev. 1897, p. 94; 1902, p. 439.

[4] δύο λήμασι is the predicate. *Class. Rev.* 1900, p. 214.

at home[1] pure Artemis bears grudge against her Father's winged hounds for sacrificing a poor timorous enchilded creature, with her young unborn; the eagles' feast is loathsome in her eyes.

Let *Sorrow, Sorrow*, be the burden, but may good prevail!

"Yet though so kindly-hearted, O Fair Maid, towards the small dew of devouring lions' womb[2] and suckling young of all wild creatures of the field, consent thou to fulfil, if ever any,[3] the omens of these fowls! omens favourable indeed, yet cause for discontent withal.[4]

"And the power of the *Healer* also I invoke, that she may not bring any adverse winds about, to stay the Grecian ships long time from sailing, her heart being set upon another Sacrifice, unsanctified by wont, for feast unfit, worker of feud in the very flesh, with awelessness of man:

[1] *οἴκοι γὰρ . . . .*, here at Aulis, before ever the expedition gets to Troy.

[2] The *lion*, which is common on Lydian coins and still extant on the ancient gates of Mycenæ, was probably the badge of the Lydian dynasty of Pelops. That seems to be the reason why the term is applied to various members of that family, Agamemnon in 1258, him or his army in 818, Clytemnestra in 1257, Aegisthus in 1223; and as the lion's offspring is a type of Helen in 718, so it appears here to mean Iphigeneia.

[3] *τόσον περ εὔφρων ⏑ ⏑ —*
δρόσοισι λεπτοῖς (or *λεπταῖς*) *μαλερῶν λεόντων*
πάντων τ' ἀγρονόμων φιλομάστοις
θηρῶν ὀβρικάλοις, εἴπερ τινά,
τούτων αἴνει ξύμβολα κρᾶναι,
δεξιὰ μέν, κατάμομφα δέ, στρουθῶν.
Class. Rev. 1901, p. 16. In the first line we should probably read *τόσον περ εὔφρων <δὲ>, καλά*, or *τόσον περ εὔφρων, ἀκαλά*, 'thou gentle one.'

[4] Since after all they are not wholly favourable to us, not satisfactory altogether (*ἀψεγῆ*, Soph. *El.* 496), but with elements in them which portend us evil too.

for there abides in wait a terrible recoiling keeper of the house, a treacherous unforgetting child-avenging Wrath!"

Such was the consequence, combined with much of good, that the voice of Calchas then pealed forth, as boded to the royal house by birds of omen by the way:—Wherewith in concord,

Let *Sorrow*, *Sorrow*, be the burden, but may good prevail!

Zeus, whosoever he may be,—if that style please his ear, by that style I address him—though my estimate tries all, there is none I can conjecture[1] besides Zeus, if I may honestly cast off the strange vague burden[2] on my mind. A violent destructive one was great of yore, swelling with blusterous pride of combat in all sorts; but shall not be reckoned, being one of the past[3]:—and he that rose up after met his overthrower and is gone:—but let a man with hearty shouts of triumph hail the name of Zeus, and he shall have understanding[4] altogether; Zeus, the guider of mankind upon the path of understanding by ordinance of *Instruction by Suffering* as a law established.[5] When sore pain that puts in mind of suffering breaks out before the heart in time of sleep, then sober thoughts come over the reluctant will:[6] it is a forced

[1] Or 'compare.'

[2] 'Causeless,' 'unaccountable,' 'unwarranted.' *μάταν*, as often, is used like the adjective *μάταιον*.

[3] *οὐδ' ὅστις πάροιθεν ἦν μέγας, παμμάχῳ θράσει βρύων,*
οὐδὲν λέξαι πρὶν ὤν

is the MS., in which the corruptions are *οὐδ' ὅστις* and *οὐδὲν λέξαι*: I have adopted the readings *οὐλός τις πάροιθεν ἦν μέγας*, and *οὐδὲ λέξεται, πρὶν ὤν*. It is all a metaphor from a wrestling combat, and *παμμάχῳ θράσει* means 'with swaggering prowess in the *παμμάχιον*,' that is, the *παγκράτιον*.

[4] The opposite of *ἁμαρτήσεται φρενῶν*.

[5] It was in this way, I believe, that Prometheus became reconciled to Zeus.

[6] *Class. Rev.* 1903, p. 241.

kindness,[1] I take it, of Powers enthroned upon an awful bench.

So was it then with the elder leader of the Achaean fleet; cavilling not at any prophet, letting his spirit yield to violent circumstance,—what time the Achaean folk were sore oppressed by famishing delay from adverse weather, while they lay off the shore opposite to Chalcis in the region where suck to and fro the shifting tides of Aulis; when gales that kept coming from the Strymon brought unwelcome idleness and hunger and bad anchorage, driving men distraught, and squandering ships and cables, doubling the time of their sojourn, so that they wore the flower of Argos painfully away; and the prophet, alleging Artemis as cause, had cried out for the cruel storm a remedy more grievous to the princes than the storm itself, so that they struck their staves upon the ground and could not refrain from tears,—then was it that the elder prince uttered voice and said: "A grievous ill it is not to consent, and grievous too if I must slay my child, the jewel of my home, defiling at the altar-side a father's hands in streaming blood from a stricken virgin's throat! Is either course not full of misery? How can I lose my alliance and be deserted by my fleet? For that they should passionately rage for sacrifice to lay the wind—a virgin's blood—is permissible[2]:—may all prove well!"

But when once he had put on the harness of Necessity, his spirit shifting to another quarter,—of wickedness and bloody sin, from that moment[3] he resigned himself to utter reckless hardihood: for what hardens the hearts of men is

[1] δαιμόνων δέ που χάρις βίαιος or βιαία: they are stern justicers, but cruel only to be kind.

[2] The reading is uncertain.

[3] τόθεν might be relative, picked up by ἔτλα δ' οὖν after the parenthesis; but in any case it refers to ἀνάγκας, for ἀνάγκη πάντολμος was proverbial.

accurst Distraction with suggestions foul, the beginning of their hurt:— ah well, he did so harden himself to be the sacrificer of his daughter, in furtherance of war waged in a woman's cause and as a rite preliminary—to voyage of ships!

Her supplications, her callings on the name of 'Father,' and her virgin years by those war-thirsty arbiters were held for nothing: her father, after prayer, gave sign to the ministers to seize her as she lay wrapped in her robes, and with a good courage hold her aloft above the altar, drooping, like a kid; and that a guard upon her lovely lips by force and dumb constraint of bridle should prevent[1] the utterance of a curse upon his house.

Shedding her saffron raiment upon the ground, her sacrificers severally from the eye she smote with a plaintive shaft,—and showing as in a picture,—wishing to utter speech to them; for many a time had she sung where men feasted at her father's friendly board; with pure voice virginal at her beloved father's third libation was the hymn for blessing wont to be celebrated by his loving child.

What followed I beheld not, neither do I tell:—only the art of Calchas was not unfulfilled. The scale of Justice lets teaching fall to the share of such as have experienced: what shall be you may hear when it is in being; ere that, e'en let it go; it were but sorrowing beforehand; it will come full clear together with the rays of dawn. However,

(*Enter* CLYTEMNESTRA.)

may good success betide now in the sequel, to the wish of yonder[2] sole immediate bulwark of the Apian land.

[1] Or φυλακῇ, 'with a guard . . . . to prevent.'

[2] Meaning Clytemnestra. ἄγχιστον describes Clytemnestra's relation to the throne, which is expressly stated in the verses following (Schuetz). It was the almost invariable practice of the Greek stage for a character

Elder. I have come, queen Clytemnestra, in deference to your authority; for when the male throne is left vacant, it is right that homage should be rendered to the consort of a reigning prince. Now, whether it be good news you have received or not—whether merely happy-tiding hopes have caused you to make sacrifice, I would gladly hear; though if you keep silence I complain not.

Clytemnestra. With *happy tidings*, as the proverb is, may Morning issue from his mother Night! But you shall hear news of joy beyond all *hope*—the Argives have taken Priam's town.

Elder. What say you? it escaped me, so incredible it seemed.

Clyt. Troy in the hands of the Achaeans: am I clear?

Elder. Joy steals over me, summoning forth a tear.

Clyt. The eye indeed argues your good feeling.

Elder. What is the evidence? Have you any warrant?

Clyt. I have, of course—unless Heaven have played false.

Elder. Is it flattering apparitions in a dream command your credence?

Clyt. I should not scream[1] out the mere fancy of a slumbering brain.

Elder. Can it be some wing-swift rumour has puffed up your thoughts?

Clyt. You make light indeed of my understanding, as though I were a young child.

Elder. Why, within what period has the destruction of the city taken place?

Clyt. Within the night that gave this present morning birth.

Elder. What messenger could arrive here at such speed?

on the first appearance to be *announced* and described for the information of the audience.

[1] οὐ δόξαν ἂν λάκοιμι βριζούσης φρενός. *Class. Rev.* 1903, p. 243.

Clyt. Hephaestus, sending bright shine forth from Ida; and with posting fire one beacon hither still kept forwarding another on; Ida to Hermes' ridge in Lemnos, and from the island next did Athos, the steep of Zeus, receive third in his turn a mighty brand; and, mounting high, to put the ocean at his back,[1] . . . . thereby announcing, like another sun, his golden radiance to the summits of Makistos. And he was by no means tardy or heedlessly overcome by sleep, to slack his duty; far over Euripus' flood his beacon light arrived, giving signal[2] to the watchers on Messapion. They, setting fire to a stack of old gray heather, lit up an answering glare and passed the message further on: and the blaze in vigour and undimmed leaped over, like the shining moon, Asopus' plain, and coming to Cithaeron's ridge aroused a fresh relief of missionary fire. The far-sped light was not rejected by that station, which burned more than their bidding;[3] their light pitched beyond the lake Gorgopis and arriving at mount Aegiplanetus urged the fiery ordinance to make no tarrying;[4] and kindling up with liberal ardour they sent onward a great beard of flame, that it should pass right beyond the promontory that looks down on the Saronic gulf, so blazing; then it pitched, when it had reached the Arachnaean steep, the watch-peak neighbouring the town: and then upon the roof of the Atridae here a gleam alighted that may claim an ancestry in fire of Ida. Such was the arrangement of my torch-bearers,—one from another in succession still supplied; and victory is with him who ran in the first place and the last.[5]

[1] Or 'to skim the broad back of the ocean.' The passage being incomplete, the line which follows cannot be explained with any certainty.

[2] Or *σημαινει μολόν* may mean 'signified his arrival'; *cf. v.* 960.

[3] Or 'more than the aforesaid.'

[4] *μὴ χρονίζεσθαι.*

[5] *πρῶτος δραμεῖν*, though it could mean 'to start first,' usually meant

Here is the warrant and the token that I give you, forwarded for me by my lord from Troy.

Elder. Lady, my prayers to heaven shall be made hereafter; but I would fain listen to your version of[1] this tale again throughout, and satisfy my wonder at it.

Clyt. This day the Greeks hold Troy. The town I guess is loud with ill-according cries: pour into the same vessel oil and vinegar, and you shall pronounce them unfriendly separated;[2] and separate so, according to their different case, may be heard the voices of the conquered and the conquerors. The one upon the bodies flung of husbands and of brothers, and on the bodies of their sons the aged fathers that begat them, are bemoaning from a throat no longer free the loss of their best loved: while the others labour of night-roving after battle ranges hungry at such breakfasts as the town affords—not after any billet in due apportionment! 'tis even according to their several drawings in Luck's lottery, they are lodged now in their captive Trojan dwellings, from the frosts and dews of the bleak open sky delivered; and how blest![3] will sleep the livelong night without a watch to keep.

Now if they are showing due reverence to the gods— those of the conquered land—and the holy places of the gods then shall they not have spoiled only to be spoiled again.

'to finish first,' and the play of words (which may have been familiar in the case of torch-running) depends upon this ambiguity. The light from Ida ran both first and last, as starting first and ending last; the light from Mount Arachnae ran both first and last, as starting last and ending first.

[1] Reading ὡς λέγεις, for which there is a variant λέγοις. Perhaps we should read ἕως λέγοις (the optative following θέλοιμ' ἄν), as ἕως ἄν is now read for ὡς ἄν in Soph. *Phil.* 1330, *Aj.* 1117, *O.C.* 1361: this would be 'so long as you should speak.'

[2] Or διχοστατοῦντ' ἄν, οὐ φίλω, 'separated, and not friends.'

[3] ὡς δ' εὐδαίμονες.

But see no lust be falling upon them first, to ravish what they should not, out of covetousness! for they have yet to travel the second member of the course, and require safe passage home. But if only they should come without having offended against Heaven, the sore hurt of the perished should grow gentle in its language[1]—so be no sudden stroke of accident befall them.

Here you have my woman's words:—but may the good prevail without all counterpoise! for of so many blessings I would see the fruit.[2]

Elder. Lady, thy woman's words are sage as a sober-minded man's. Now, having heard good warrant from thee, I address me to make prayers to Heaven,[3] for there hath been wrought for the labour no unworthy recompense.

[*Exit* CLYTEMNESTRA.

Chorus. O Zeus, the King of Heaven! and thou O Night our friend, possessor of great glories! For upon the castled walls of Troy thou didst cast a net of proof, that neither great nor any young one should surmount the huge enslaving trawl, a Doom of universal capture.

Zeus it is of Hospitality that I acknowledge as the achiever of this act; he bent his bow on Alexander with long aim that so his bolt should neither fall short of the mark nor soar beyond the stars to alight without effect.

'*It is the stroke of Zeus that they have felt*' may be pronounced, and fully traced.[4] His act achieved was according to his determination. It hath been said by one that the gods deign not to take note of such on earth as trample

[1] εὐήγορον. *Class. Rev.* 1903, p. 289

[2] τὴν ὄνησιν MS., 'the due fruit.'

[3] θεοὺς προσειπεῖν αὖ παρασκευάζομαι as Ar. *Av.* 226, *Thesm.* 99. They don't say εὖ προσειπεῖν or προσαυδᾶν, but the verb alone.

[4] Διὸς πλαγὰν ἔχουσιν' εἰπεῖν πάρεστιν, τοῦτό τ' ἐξιχνεῦσαι. *Class. Rev.* 1902, p. 440.

on sweet sanctities: but he was irreligious! Manifest as penalty for wicked sin hath here been shown us havoc of presumptuous arrogance[1] with mansions teeming in excess beyond the Best;[2] and let that be, with a good endowment of the mind to have sufficience without hurt. For there is no strong fortress to be found for him that in surfeit of Wealth kicks into obscurity[3] the great sanctuary of Righteousness.

But he is forced by the wretch Temptation, fearful child of designing Doom. Then cure is all in vain. His evil is not hidden, but shows forth plainly as a sinister gleam; like base metal under the application of the rubbing touch-stone he is found to have a dark stain fixed in him—being as a child in pursuit of a bird upon the wing[4]—laying fearful contamination upon all his people.[5] To prayers no god will listen, but pulls down as guilty the man that is conversant with such things.

Such a man was Paris, who visited the home of the Atreidae and then did scandal to the guest-table by theft of a wedded woman.

She, bequeathing to her own countrymen bustling stir of men with shield and spear and armament of seamen, and bringing to Ilium, in the place of dowry, ruin, hath passed nimbly through the gates, in commission of a crime! Then sorely wailed the spokesman of the house,[6] crying, *Alas, alas for the home, the home and for the princes! Alas for the husband's bed and the wifely print of her form upon*

[1] πέφανται δ' ἐκτίνουσ' ἀτολμήτων ἀρὴ πνεόντων μεῖζον ἢ δικαίως. *Class. Rev.* 1901, p. 105. Compare *v.* 1512.

[2] *I.e.* τὸ μέτρον, Due Measure.

[3] *I.e.* puts it out of his sight.

[4] Ambition winged by Hope.

[5] πόλει πρόστριμμα θεὶς ἄφερτον.

[6] Those who voiced abroad the state of Menelaus who sat moping in a corner abject and abased.

it! Silence may be seen, dishonoured, unreviling, ... silence of moping grief that sits apart;[1] *through yearning for one beyond the sea it would appear a phantom that is master of the house. The charm of shapely statues is become hateful in his sight; in the lack of eyes*[2] *all passion of love is lost.*

In dream there still are present ~~flattering~~[3] *semblances,—* 430
bringing only a vain joy; for all in vain, when fancying that he beholds his bliss[4]*—away through his hands the vision slips and is gone a moment afterwards on wings attendant upon the travelling of Sleep.*

These, and transcending these, are the sorrows by the hearth at home; while at large for such as launched together from the land of Hellas what is proper is heart-broken mourning[5] of their several houses; there is plenty at any 440
rate that touches to the heart! — those whom each sped forth to war he knows; but instead of men those that return again to their several homes are urns[6] and ashes.

Ares, the Changer—of bodies, whose balances are poised —in the battle, sends back from Ilium for their friends at home a heavy dust passed through the fire for bitter tears, filling small decent vessels[7] with ashes in exchange for man. 450

Then they make lamentation, duly praising each man,— this one as an expert warrior, that one as nobly fallen in the carnage — '*for sake of another's wife!*' growls some one under his breath; and sore resentment spreads covertly against the principals in the quarrel, the Atridae.

[1] *πάρεστι σιγὰς ἀτίμους ἀλοιδόρους . . . . ἀφημένων ἴδεῖν.*

[2] Through which come *ἵμερος*: as *χειρῶν ὀλλυμένων, ἔρρεν πολυεργὸς Ἀθήνη*, Orpheus in Lobeck *Aglaopham.* p. 951.

[3] *πειθήμονες*, Housman, as *ὀνείρων φάσματ' εὐπιθῆ*, *v.* 286.

[4] *εὖτ' ἂν ἐσθλά τις δοκῶν ὁρᾶν*—'when (he would embrace her)'; but the verb is effectively omitted. *Class. Rev.* 1898, p. 246.

[5] *πένθει' ἀτλησικάρδιος* as *ἀτλησίφρων.*

[6] Or 'arms.' [7] *Class. Rev.* 1902, p. 438.

While others there abroad in all their shapeliness occupy tombs in Ilian land—occupants hidden beneath a hated soil.

A people's talk when in wrath is dangerous; it performs the office of a curse publicly decreed. My anxious thought awaits the news of something shrouded now in night:—the Gods are not regardless of such as cause much bloodshed; when a man is prosperous unrighteously, the black Erinyes by dwindling waste again of his substance cause him to grow faint and dim; and when he is finally among the vanished, there is no help then.

Dangerous, moreover, is exceeding good report; for lofty peaks are struck from heaven by jealous eyes of Zeus.[1] Good fortune free from envy is my choice: I would neither be despoiler, nor yet be made captive myself to see my life under the dominion of another.[2]

One of the Elders. Swift rumour has gone through the city at good tidings brought by fire; but whether it be true or not, who knows? Supposing it be not some divine deceit.[3]

Another. Who is so childish or so crazy as to let his heart be fired by messaging in flame only to sink again upon the contradiction of the story?

Another. It is like a woman's lightness to yield assent to pleasure before the appearance of proof visible.

Another. Feminine desire is over-easily persuaded and spreads rapidly;[4] but as rapidly extinguished doth fame voiced by a woman perish.

One of the Elders who has been looking out towards the

[1] βάλλεται γὰρ ὅσσοις Διόθεν κάρανα, Tucker.
[2] μήτ' οὖν αὐτὸς ἁλοὺς ὑπ' ἄλλῳ βίον κατίδοιμι.
[3] εἰ δ' ἐτήτυμος τίς οἶδεν; εἴ τι θεῖόν ἐστι μὴ ψύθος.
[4] As *fire* does. πιθανὸς ἄγαν ὁ θῆλυς ἔρος ἐπινέμεται ταχύπορος· *Class. Rev.* 1902, p. 441.

sea. We shall soon know about these beaconings of light-bearing torches and these passings-on of fire, whether they be true, or whether this light came only with a dream-like joy to cheat our sense:—I see a Herald yonder coming from the shore beneath the shade of olive-branches:—and by Mire's consorting sister, thirsty Dust, I am assured of this,—he shall not make you sign without a voice or by kindling flame of mountain timber with mere smoke, but with express words shall make either joy more plain, or else —but with the alternative I have no patience now; may fair result appear to cap fair witness visible!

Another. If there be any that prays otherwise, let him reap himself the fruit of his misguidedness.

(*Enter* HERALD.)

Herald. O my dear fatherland, my native soil of Argos, on this blessed day in the tenth year[1] I have come back to thee again, when many a hope hath snapped, successful in this one;[2] I never thought that I should die in Argos here and have my share of burial in this dearest land. Now at last my blessing on the land, and blessed be the Sun's light, and Zeus the land's most high, and blessed be the Lord of Pytho and shoot forth his shafts no longer upon us! Thine enmity was shown sufficiently beside Scamander's banks; but show thyself *Preserver* now and *Healer*, Lord Apollo! My salutation to the Gods of Gathering all, and chiefly my own patron, Hermes the dear Herald, whom heralds worship; and to the Heroes that once sent us forth, praying that they may receive again with kindness what the spear hath spared. Hail royal palaces, beloved abodes, and august seats, and sunward-facing deities—with bright eyes radiant now, if ever formerly, welcome the King duly after all

[1] δεκάτου.

[2] Hopes being *anchors* or *cables* to a Greek.

this time! For bringing light in the night-time both to you and all this company together hath King Agamemnon come! O give him, then, good welcome! for indeed it is his due, since he hath levelled Troy with the mattock of Zeus Justicer, whereby the soil hath been broken and the seed of all the land destroyed.[1] So heavy is the yoke upon Troy's neck laid by our prince the elder son of Atreus, man of blessed destiny, who now hath come; and who of all men living is the worthiest to be honoured; for neither Paris nor his associate[2] people can profess that what they did surpasses what they have suffered: cast in a suit for rape and theft, he hath not only lost his plunder but hath caused his fathers' house to be shorn off and utterly destroyed with all the land pertaining; thus the sons of Priam have paid twofold penalty for their offence.

Elder. Herald of the allies returned from the field, I wish you joy.

Herald. Thanks; let me die now![3] I'll oppose the will of God no more.

Elder. Was it love-sickness for home that tried you?

Herald. Ay, so much that my eyes fill with tears for joy.

Elder. It was a sweet disease, then, this that you had gotten.

Herald. How is that? Instruct me, and I shall master that saying.

Elder. As being smitten with desire for those that returned your passion.

[1] The MSS. insert *βωμοὶ δ' ἄϊστοι καὶ θεῶν ἱδρύματα*, *Persae* 813 quoted from memory in illustration: it would be impossible here. *Class. Rev.* 1898, p. 246; 1902, p. 439.

[2] *συντελής*, sharing the same privileges, and so involved in the same liabilities.

[3] *χαίρω· τεθναίην (δ')· οὐκέτ' ἀντερῶ θεοῖς.* 'Now I can depart in peace, for happiness and content' (*v.* 555).

Herald. Do you mean that you longed for the army as it longed for home?

Elder. So much that I have often sighed with a vague misgiving heart.[1]

Herald. Whence came this gloom that hung over you disliking war abroad?[2]

Elder. Silence has long been my preservative against hurt.

Herald. How? In the absence of our princes were there any that you stood in fear of?

Elder. So much that now, in your own phrase,[3] even death were joy.

Herald. Indeed it is a grand success:—though, taking the time in all, with part that one may call successful there was part unsatisfactory—none but a god can live unhurt perpetually:—for were I to recount our labours and hard lodging — rare vouchsafements[4] and with sorry bed — and . . . .[5] Then again our lot on shore was even worse; for our lying was close against the enemy's walls, and drizzling from the sky and dews from the fenny earth distilled upon us with abiding damage, making our hairy garments full of vermin. And if one were to tell of winter —how fearful was the cold, killing the birds, that snows on Ida made—or heat, when on his noonday couch unruffled by a breath the deep lay sunk in slumber without ripple? —What need is there to repine for this? The labour is past,—for the dead, so past that they will never care now even to rise again:—what is the use of reckoning the tale of all the spent and of the live heart grieving for malignant

[1] ὡς πόλλ' ἀμαυρᾶς ἐκ φρενός γ' ἀναστένειν.

[2] πόθεν τὸ δύσφρον τοῦτ' ἐπῆν στυγνοστράτῳ;

[3] His τεθναίην in *v.* 544.

[4] σπαρνὰς παρείξεις (from παρείκω as εἶξις from εἴκω), 'opportunities,' or 'relaxations.'

[5] τί δ' οὐ στένοντες οὐ λαχόντες ἤματος μέρος; MS.

fate? I think that our misfortunes may be fairly asked to take a long farewell.[1] For us, the remnant of the Argive host, the gain outweighs, the suffering is no counterpoise; so that we may well go flying over land and sea upon the wings of fame this bright day boasting thus: '*By Argives, having at last captured Troy, unto the Gods throughout all Hellas were pinned up these trophies, to be a monumental glory for their shrines.*' Those that hear such doings should applaud the country and the captains; and the grace of Zeus shall be duly prized, as the achiever of this act.—You have my tale in full.

Elder. I am overborne, and yield with a good grace, for docility keeps ever young.[2]—But this should most concern the house and Clytemnestra, though enriching me at the same time.

Clyt. I lifted up my jubilant hymn before, a while ago, when the first messenger arrived by night in fire, declaring the capture and laying waste of Ilium; and they rebuked me, saying, '*Art thou so persuaded by beacons to believe that Troy is taken? O like a woman to be so exalted!*' This was the language, arguing my wits abroad; yet I continued offering, and throughout the town they raised the jubilant anthem after woman's use, lulling in the shrines the spice-fed odorous flame.

So now, what need is there for *thee* to tell me all the circumstances? I shall soon learn the whole story from the King himself: but that I may hasten best to receive my honoured lord on his return—for to a woman's eyes what hour is sweeter than the hour when heaven-preserved her

[1] καὶ πολλὰ χαίρειν συμφορὰς καταξιῶ, one of the many variations of the phrase χαίρειν λέγω or κελεύω. The sense is ἔρρετ' ἀνῖαι, *valete curae!*

[2] ἀεὶ γὰρ ἡβᾶ τοῖς (or τοι) γέρουσιν εὐμαθεῖν, 'teachableness,' as δυσμαθεῖν from δυσμαθής. 'It is never too late to learn.'

husband comes home from the field and she unbars her gates for him?—take back this message, that he come with all speed, the country's darling, come to find in his home a faithful wife, even as he left her, a true hound on guard, to him still constant, foe to his ill-wishers, and for the rest, alike at all parts, never having tampered all this while with any seal; of joys from another man—nay, even the breath of scandal—I am as innocent as of plunging metal! [*Exit.*

Herald. Such is the boasting; though brim-full of truth, unseemly, surely, for a noble dame to trumpet?[1]

Elder. That is *her* protestation, as you apprehend,—in the judgment of good critics only specious. But now your story, Herald,—Menelaus, what of our beloved prince? Shall we see him safe back with you?

Herald. It were impossible to paint falsehood in fair colours and enable the enjoyment of it to be lasting.

Elder. Might fortune then permit you to show *truth* in a fair guise! When true and fair are sundered, it is ill-concealed.

Herald. The man has disappeared from the allied force, together with his ship: there is no falsehood there.

Elder. Had he launched forth in full sight from Ilium, or was it a storm befalling all in common that tore him from the rest?

Herald. You have hit the target like a master, and concisely phrased a long story of distress.

Elder. Did general talk from other voyagers speak of him as alive or dead?

Herald. No one has the knowledge to report with certainty, except the Sun who fosters the earth's growth.

Elder. What is your account of the storm's coming by the wrath of deity, and its result?

Herald. It is not proper to profane a day of praise with the

[1] *Class. Rev.* 1903, p. 242.

voice of evil tidings: that ceremony is apart from Gods of Heaven.[1] When a messenger with gloomy countenance reports disastrous accident of an army overthrown—one general wound befalling the city and from their many several homes the excommunication of their men under that twofold scourge that Ares uses,[2] destruction double-armed, bloodshed in double harness—when, I say, the burden on his back is of that kind, then proper is it that the hymn he utters should be this to the Erinyes:—but when he comes with good tidings of preservation to a city blest in the enjoyment of all happiness,—how then should I commingle good with evil, speaking of a storm that came upon the Achaeans surely through the wrath of Heaven! For Fire and Sea, the bitterest enemies before, now swore alliance[3] and displayed their compact by destroying the unhappy Argive army. In the night-time rose up trouble of the waves; for Thracian winds dashed our ships against each other; and they, being rammed with blast of the hurricane and battering sleet, by the wild handling of that evil shepherd disappeared. And when the bright light of the sun rose up, we saw the surface of the Aegean ocean as in flower with corpses of our men and wreck of ships. We however with our ship undamaged in the hull were either stolen off or begged off by some Power more than human with his hand upon our helm: and Saviour Fortune sat of her grace upon our ship so that we should neither suffer surf at

[1] *Class. Rev.* 1901, p. 23; Plat. *Tim.* 69D, *Legg.* 828C.

[2] An ἀγήλατος μάστιξ, as it were, with two lashes, one inflicting public and the other private wound; *Class. Rev.* 1902, p. 60: these two wounds are described in the line following, where the metaphor in δίλογχον is from the common practice of carrying a pair of spears.

[3] This in the usual story was regarded as a compact struck between Poseidon and Athena (privileged to employ her Father's lightning), who had previously been on opposite sides. The opening of the *Troades* of Euripides shows them making this agreement.

anchor nor strand upon a rock-bound shore. Then, having escaped a watery grave, with white dawn, hardly crediting our fortune, we let our thoughts dwell upon our sudden reverse, our fleet being wrecked and sorely buffeted. So likewise are *they* now—if there be any of them yet alive—speaking of *us* as perished, doubtless; while *we* imagine *them* to be in the same condition. Let us hope the best we may! For Menelaus, though your first and chiefest expectation must indeed be that he is in sore straits,[1] still, if there be any ray of the Sun descrying him alive and sound, there is some hope that by the contrivances of Zeus, being not yet minded to destroy the race entirely, he may yet reach home again.

So much you may be assured is a true story.

CHORUS.

Who can it have been that gave a name thus altogether true—was it some Being invisible, guiding his tongue happily by foreknowledge of fate?—to Helen the bride of war, the centre of contention? For she proved with fitness *Hell enow* to ship and man and town when issuing from her sumptuous chamber-curtains she set sail before the breath of Earth-sprung Zephyrus[2]—and after her a swarming host of men, fierce hunters armed with shield upon the trail,—the unseen oar-blade trail of a quarry that had landed at the leafy banks of Simois,—in bloody rivalry.

But thought-executing Wrath brought that κῆδος to

[1] προσδόκα μογεῖν.—πρῶτόν τε καὶ μάλιστα means μάλιστα μὲν καὶ πρῶτον, to which εἰ δ' οὖν is the opposition.

[2] Who according to one story was the father of Ἔρως: Lydus *de mens.* p. 117 Bekker Ἔρωτι, ὃν οἱ μυθικοὶ Ζεφύρου τοῦ γίγαντος εἶναι ἀξιοῦσιν, ὥς φησιν Εὔρυτος ὁ Λακεδαιμόνιος ὁ μελοποιός: Bergk *Poet. Lyr.* iii. p. 639. It was as the wind of Love that Zephyr lent his aid.

fulfilment in the true meaning of the term,[1] by exacting account in after time for dishonouring of the Stranger's Table and of Zeus of the shared home from those who once so freely[2] celebrated the bride-honouring strain, the kinsmen to whose part it fell to sing the wedding-chorus then.

Now in her age doth Priam's ancient city learn a different strain, a strain of plenteous lamentation; loud, I ween, she moans now, terming Paris '*O thou fatal wedded!*' after having suffered in time previous an age of most plenteous lamentation[3] for the sorrowful blood of her own sons.

A Herdsman kept once and adopted in his own house a Lion's offspring,[4] still at breast; that in its life's preluding stage was tame, the friend of childhood and the delight (even) of the venerable;[5] and often took it in his arms like a nursling infant, under stress of appetite wooing the hand with radiant visage.[6]

But when time had passed over him, he revealed the true nature he derived from his parentage:—in payment of his debt of maintenance he made ready—at no man's bidding—a feast with destruction of the cattle; so that the house was drenched in gore, the habitants aghast in helpless agony, and great was the slaughterous damage. The will

[1] κῆδος ὀρθώνυμον μῆνις ἤνυσεν. *Class. Rev.* 1900, p. 116. There is no word in English that will cover the two senses of κῆδος, 'relationship by marriage' and 'mourning' (the due office of relations). '*Hell enow*' above is perhaps the best that can be done for Ἑλέναυς, 'destroyer of ships.'

[2] ἐκφάτως; or εὐφάτως (*i.e.* εὐφήμως), 'with note of praise and gladness,' which afterwards became δύσφημον.

[3] τἄμπροσθ' ἢ πολύθρηνον.

[4] ἔθρεψεν δέ λέοντος ἶνιν δόμοις ἀγάλακτα βούτας ἀνήρ, Wecklein.

[5] Compare Hom. *Il.* 3. 149–158.

[6] φαιδρωπὸν ποτὶ χεῖρα σαίνοντα—like Ate, *v.* 1227, *Pers.* 98.

of God had domiciled him in the house to be the minister of destroying Doom!

Likewise I would say there came to the city of Ilium one for the moment[1] with a spirit of unruffled Calm, a languorous jewel in the crown of Wealth, with soft arrows of the eye, a blossom of loveliness to wound the heart:—

But then she swerved aside and brought the union to completion with a bitter end, launched upon the sons of Priam with curse in her habitance and curse in her companionship, in the conduct of Zeus Hospitable, an Erinys bringing tears to brides!

There is a venerable saying hath been framed on earth of old, that human Weal, when come to the full growth, has issue, and dies not childless; that Woe insatiable is the natural heritage of good fortune.

But my view is different from the world's and single: that it is the *sinful* deed which begets more in the likeness of his own kind, whereas righteous houses are ever blest in their children.

It is the wont of ancient *Insolence* to engender in the evil—soon or late, when comes the appointed hour—a youthful Insolence, in cloud of darkness an avenging Spirit[2] that neither fight nor battle can withstand, of sinful recklessness bringing black ruinous Doom upon the habitation—an Insolence in the likeness of its progenitors.

But *Righteousness* doth shine in sooty dwellings, and shows her honour to the virtuous man; your gold-bespangled mansions where there is filth upon the hands she forsakes with eyes averted and addresses her unto the holy,[3] bowing not before the power of Wealth—false coin made current

[1] *πάραυτα*, of which *παραυτ-ίκα* is the temporal adverb, as *αὐτ-ίκα*, *τηνικα*.

[2] *βαθύσκοτον δαίμονα τίταν*.

[3] *ὅσια προσέφατο*, Tucker.

by the world's approval—and guides all things to their proper goal.

[*Enter* AGAMEMNON *in a four-wheeled travelling-wagon drawn by mules; followed presently by another containing among other spoils* CASSANDRA, *who continues motionless and silent but in view.*

CHORUS.

Come now, O King, despoiler of Troy, offspring of Atreus, how shall I address thee or show thee homage without overshooting or falling short of the due measure of thy content? There are many that dishonestly affect mere outward show:[1] each is ready to heave a sigh over distress, no pang of sorrow reaching to the heart; and likewise in the similitude of such as share in joy, forcing their unsmiling countenances, ...[2] But he that is a good judge of the flock shall never be deceived by human *eyes* that while feigning to glow with warm affection are yet flattering only with a lukewarm love.

Thou, in the time when thou wast despatching an armament for sake of Helen, wast pictured to my eyes—I will not cloke it—in most unlovely lineaments; as not guiding well the rudder of thy wits in seeking to recover at the cost of good men's lives a willing wanton.[3] But now with no shallow feeling or false friendship < I may say > 'The labour smiles on the successful labourer.'[4] In course

[1] Or τὸ δοκεῖν εὖνοι (as Lucian iii. 274), 'the pretence of kindness.'

[2] The line has been lost which contained the finite verb; 'they smile only with the lips' was the usual thing to say. *Class. Rev.* 1900, p. 116; 1903, p. 244.

[3] *I.e.* Helen. *Class. Rev.* 1900, p. 116.

[4] νῦν δ' οὐκ ἀπ' ἄκρας φρενὸς οὐδ' ἀφίλως
< ἔστιν ἐπειπεῖν >
'εὔφρων πόνος εὖ τελέσασιν.' *Class. Rev.* 1898, p. 247.

of time thou wilt discover by enquiry whose stewardship of the state among thy folk is honest, and whose unseasonable.

Agam. My salutations are due first to Argos and the Gods of the country, that have shared with me in my safe journey and in justice I have wreaked upon the town of Priam. Having heard the unvoiced cause, they cast into the urn of blood, with no dissentient, their votes for perishing and waste of Ilium; to the other vessel Hope of the filling hand kept coming nigh, without fulfilment. The capture of the city now remains still manifest by the smoke: there is life yet in the gusts of Ate,[1] and the ash expiring with them puffs out rich breaths of wealth.

For this should memorable reward be paid to the Gods; seeing that we have taken vengeance for an arrogant rape and for a woman's sake a city hath been laid desolate by a fierce Argive monster, hatched by a Horse in form of people armed, that made its spring about the sinking of the Pleiades and leaping over the strong walls (like) a raw-fed lion lapped its fill of despot's blood.

This lengthened preface for the Gods: as for your sentiment, which I remember,—I agree; you have me of your counsel: few are they with whom it is natural to admire a friend's good fortune without jealousy; that bitter venom settles at the heart making the diseased man's burden double heavy: not only is he bowed beneath his own sore load, but groans at the sight of prosperous ease in others. With knowledge—for I am well acquainted with that glass, companionship—I may pronounce *ghost of a shadow* certain ones in seeming most devoted to me:—only Odysseus, he that sailed against his will, when harnessed pulled beside me zealously at need,—whether he be dead now or alive. . . . For the rest, affairs of state and of religion, we shall appoint general meetings and deliberate in full

[1] Or θυηλαί, 'in Doom's burnt-sacrifice.'

assembly: and our deliberation must be how what is well now may continue well; where we find aught in need of medicinal remedies, we shall endeavour to remove the mischief by sage use of knife or searing-iron.—Now I will proceed to my palace and my own home's hearth, to begin with salutation to the Gods who sped me forth and have brought me home again: may Victory, as she hath attended me, remain still constant!

Clyt. Good citizens, Council of Argos here before me, I shall not blush to confess to you my loving disposition—timidity wears away in time. It is not from others' prompting I shall speak now of my own unhappy life the whole time that my lord here was absent before Ilium. In the first place it is fearful hardship for a woman without man to sit at home all solitary, her ears filled with malignant rumours, and for one after another to come crying out disasters for the house each worse than the last. Wounds, —if my lord received as many wounds as rumour still in conduit hither kept reporting, he must have perforations in him[1] past the number of a net:—or if his deaths had been as numerous as the stories, he might have had three bodies—Geryon the second—with an ample threefold coverlet of earth to boast above him—never speak of that beneath—one death for each several form! In consequence of such malignant rumours many a time by force against my eager will[2] have others loosened the suspended halter from my neck. This is the reason that we have not standing by our side here, as we should, the boy Orestes, who in his person owns the pledges of love between us two: think it not strange; he is in the keeping of our good ally, Strophius the Phocian, who forewarned me of trouble on two accounts, —thine own peril before Ilium, and the chance that popular tumultuous anarchy might plot[3] conspiracy against us, it

[1] τέτμηται. [2] πρὸς βίαν λελιμμενης. [3] καταρράψειεν.

being natural impulse when a man is down to kick him more:—this was the representation, carrying no guile in it.

For myself, the welling springs of tears have run quite dry, there is not a drop left in them; I have suffered injury to my late-watching eyes through weeping for the still-neglected lamps alight for thee: and in my dreams the faintest wing-beats of a whining gnat would startle me while I beheld more accidents to thee than could be in the time that shared my sleep.

Now at length after going through all this with unrepining spirit I would hail my husband here as watch-dog of the fold, preserving mainstay of the ship, firm-grounded pillar of the lofty roof, a sole-born child appearing to a father, land appearing to a sailor beyond hope![1] [Fairest is the sight of daylight after storm, spring-water to the thirsty wayfarer, and sweet is the deliverance from all distress.] These are the terms I use to do his merit honour; and let Envy keep afar, for the troubles we have been enduring in time past were plenty.—Now, dear my lord, step from that wagon, —but not setting on the ground thy royal foot, the vanquisher of Ilium!—Come, make haste, women, upon whom the office hath been laid to strew with tapestries the path he treads upon! Straightway let a purple road be made, that Justice may conduct him to his undreamed home.

The rest shall never-slumbering thought dispose in fashion just—please God—to all content.[2]

Agam. Offspring of Leda, warden of my house, thy speech was appropriate enough to my absence,—because it has

[1] μονογενὲς τέκνον πατρὶ (παρ' ἐλπίδα φανέν) is the meaning: *Class. Rev.* 1903, p. 244.—The three lines bracketed which follow look as though they had been quoted from elsewhere in the margin.

[2] Reading θήσει δικαίως, σὺν θεοῖς, θυμάρμενα or σὺν θεοῖσιν, ἄρμενα for σύν θεοῖς εἱμαρμένα, 'shall dispose in fashion just—God willing—as ordained by Fate.'

been lengthy; but becoming commendation—that is an honour that should come from other lips. Moreover, pamper me not so, as though I were a woman; nor adore me, as though I were an Eastern, with loud open-mouthed prostrations; nor bring down jealousy upon my path by strewing it with raiment. These are the pomps to honour divine beings with; but for human feet to tread upon embroidered fineries is to my conscience by no means without cause of fear. I charge you, venerate me not as God but as a man: the words '*footmats*' and '*embroideries*' ring very differently in report,[1] and a sane mind is the greatest gift of Heaven. Felicitation should be deferred until a man has ended his life in happy state. I have said how I should act herein with a good conscience.[2]

Clyt. Now tell me this, of your honest mind,——

Agam. My mind, you may assure yourself, I shall not alter.

Clyt. —Would you in an hour of danger have made this manner of proceeding[3] a vow promised to Heaven?

Agam. Yes, if the performance of such ritual had been prescribed by well-advised authority.

Clyt. And Priam,—what think you he had done upon the same achievement?

[1] Blass, *Mélanges Henri Weil* (1898), p. 13: to walk merely over ποδόψηστρα would be ἀνεπίφθονον: but it would have a very different sound if rumour said that he had walked upon τὰ ποικίλα, which belong to the service of the Gods.

[2] εἶπον τάδ' ὡς πράσσοιμ' ἂν εὐθαρσὴς ἐγώ. Perhaps the meaning is 'I will act herein with an easy conscience in the manner I have stated.'

[3] That is, of course, sacrificing dyed garments. The right reading is

ΚΛ. ηὔξω θεοῖς δείσας ἂν ὧδ' ἔρξειν τάδε;
ΑΓ. εἴπερ τις εἰδώς γ' εὖ τόδ' ἐξεῖπεν τέλος.

where the MS. gives ἔρδειν and ἐξεῖπον. So in *v.* 954 Clytemnestra says πολλῶν πατησμὸν εἱμάτων ἂν ηὐξάμην, 'I would readily have vowed the sacrifice of many robes to ransom Agamemnon's life.'—He would have obeyed Calchas as he had done in the matter of Iphigeneia.

Agam. I think he had walked upon embroideries most certainly.

Clyt. Have no scruple then for censure of mankind.

Agam. There is much force, nevertheless, in the murmur of a people's talk.

Clyt. Ay, but he is not thought enviable that moves no jealousy ! 930

Agam. It is quite unwomanly to thirst for contest.

Clyt. But felicity is graced by yielding victory.

Agam. Do *you* set store on '*victory*' of that kind?

Clyt. O yield ; though you are the superior, if you make me a voluntary concession.[1]

Agam. Well, if it is your pleasure, let my shoes, that serve the foot in the office of a slave, be loosed : and as I tread upon these purples, may I not be smitten from afar by any jealous eye of Heaven ! For indeed I have much conscience to be prodigal,[2] in wasting wealth, textures cost- 940 ing silver.—So much for me :[3] now take this damsel in with kindness ; a gentle master is regarded with approval from afar by God : no one submits willingly to the yoke of slavery, and she, who hath followed in my train, was presented by the army as the choicest flower of all our treasure.—Since I am constrained to listen to thy will herein, I will go towards my palace trampling purples.

Clyt. There is the whole sea—surely none shall dry it up ! 950 —breeding, only for its weight of silver, stain renewable of purple in abundance for the dyeing of robes ; and of these, my lord, the house—thank Heaven—affords us store already ;[4]

[1] πιθοῦ· κρατεῖς μέν τοι παρεὶς γ' ἑκὼν ἐμοί, as Soph. *Aj.* 1353.

[2] δωματοφθορεῖν, poetical for οἰκοφθορεῖν. This is the scruple that Clytemnestra scoffingly replies to in *v.* 949.

[3] τοὐμὸν μὲν οὕτω.

[4] Cf. Theocr. 22, 223, Eur. *El.* 359, 868. If any alteration is to be made, I think it should be οἶκοι.

penury is a thing the house is not acquainted with. Nay, I would have vowed the trampling of a thousand robes had it been so enjoined upon the house at the oracles when I was contriving means for the recovery of this precious life! The root existing, foliage reaches to a house, spreading thereby a shade against the parching Dogstar; so on thy arrival at thy hearth and home, warmth as it were in winter signifies its coming,[1] ay, and what season Zeus above matureth wine out of the bitter unripe grape,[2] then is there coolness within doors when the complete man is about his house:— [*As* AGAMEMNON *goes in.*

O Zeus *Completer*, grant completion of my prayer, and take good heed of what thou meanest to complete! [*Exit.*

Chorus. Wherefore doth this spirit of dread so fixedly keep hovering, ever set before my boding consciousness?[3] Why without bidding or reward doth music chant me warning prophecy? And why can I not forthwith puff it from me like a puzzling dream and have assuring confidence seated on my bosom's throne?[4] Time . . . the general cast of the stern-cables ashore . . . the sea-borne host sped for the walls of Troy,[5] and by the witness

[1] *σημαίνει μολόν.*

[2] The meaning in her mind is Zeus maturing vengeance for Iphigeneia; and it is this that causes the elaborate shape of the comparison, and explains the significance of the particles *ὅταν δὲ τεύχῃ Ζεύς γε*, 'ay, and when Zeus,' or 'ay, but when Zeus.'

[3] *Class. Rev.* 1902, p. 437.

[4] *οὐδ' ἀποπτύσας . . . . θάρσος εὐπειθὲς ἵζει φρενὸς φίλον θρόνον*, the construction slightly varied from *οὐδ' ἀποπτύσας . . . . θαρσῶ.*

[5] Corrupt and difficult to restore: one notion is

χρόνος δ' ἐπεὶ
πρυμνησίων ξυνεμβολάς
ψαμμὶς (or *ψαμμὰς*) *ἀγὰ παρήφ—*
ησεν εὖθ' ὕπ' Ἴλιον
ἆρτο ναυβάτας στρατός.

'Time has passed since the sandy shore chafed (or 'grazed,' from

of my own eyes I am assured of their return; yet still my soul within me all-untutored keeps intoning that untunable dirge-note of Vengeance, without owning altogether the sweet confidence of hope. There is true meaning in the agitation of my inward parts: the breast my heart is dashed against gives warrantable presage, and the eddying tides that hurl it give assurance of fulfilment![1] Yet may all belie my fears and fall out false, and end in being unfulfilled! 980

Health, grown large, will never rest content within his limit; yet against it presses neighbour Sickness with a common party-wall between:[2] and so doth human fortune when in full career strike (suddenly) upon a hidden shoal (of calamity).[3] 990

Yet if only cautious Diffidence cast (concern for) the store of riches overboard (beforehand) from the derrick of Due Measure,[4] the whole fabric does not founder through being surcharged with a pernicious freight; does not en-

παρ—αφάω) the cables cast out together from the stern when the sea borne host sped for the walls of Troy.' Cf. *v.* 40 and 437.

[1] πρὸς ἐνδίκοις φρεσὶν τελεσφόροις δίναις κυκώμενον κέαρ. *Class. Rev.* 1902, p. 437.

[2] Corrupted, but the sense is clear: probably it should begin with μάλα τι . . . .

[3] καὶ πότμος εὐθυπορῶν
ἀνδρὸς ἔπαισεν <ἄφνω
δυστυχίας πρὸς> ἄφαντον ἔρμα.

[4] καὶ τὸ μὲν πρὸ χρημάτων
κτησίων ὄκνος βαλὼν
σφενδόνας ἀπ' εὐμέτρου

MS., which I believe to be correct, though the grammatical construction of the words τὸ μὲν πρὸ χρημάτων is uncertain. ὄκνος (nearly the same as εὐλάβεια) is the opposite of θράσος 'rash, confident security,' which leads men to disaster (ἄτη). σφενδόνη (*Class. Rev.* 1900, p. 5) was the technical term for the derrick used for discharging cargo. μέν marks the antithesis with *v.* 1004, τὸ δ' ἐπὶ γᾶν πεσὸν . . . as in *Supp.* 452.

gulf the hull; a large and bounteous gift of Zeus above even from the annual ploughing of the fields dispels the plague of famine.

But human blood once fallen aforetime mortal on the earth,—who shall call it up again with incantations? Even the one who had the proper science to raise up from the dead,—did Zeus not stop him again to prevent his purposes being thwarted?[1] Were it not that fated portions ordered by divine will are kept by each other in control and prevented from gaining advantage over one another, heart had outrun tongue and poured this out; but now frets only fuming in the dark, anguished and without hope ever of evolving aught to timely purpose from a fevered brain.

(*Enter* CLYTEMNESTRA.)

Clyt. Get thee within doors also, thou Cassandra: since Zeus hath mercifully made thee a partaker in our holy water, allowing thee to take thy place with all our other slaves before the altar of Possession, leave the wagon and be not over-proud: they say Alcmena's own son once submitted to bondage in spite of the slave's fare.[2] [Best no doubt to be exempted from that fortune;[3]] if, however, that condition should be forced upon one, there is great comfort in having masters with hereditary wealth; those who have reaped a rich harvest unexpectedly are ever harsh and inequitable to their slaves. You have from us the customary treatment.

Elder. She hath done; it is to thee she has been speaking in plain terms. Being a prisoner within the toils of

[1] οὐδὲ τὸν ὀρθοδαῆ
τῶν φθιμένων ἀνάγειν
Ζεὺς ἀπέπαυσεν ἐπ' ἀβλαβείᾳ;

[2] δουλίας μάζης βίᾳ (Verrall).

[3] If a line to this effect has not been lost, it is at any rate implied.

Fate, you had better yield if you can find it in your heart; perhaps you cannot.

Clyt. Well, unless she be, like a swallow, possessed of some strange foreign tongue, my words must speak within her comprehension and persuade her to consent.

Elder. Go with her; what she says is the best that may be as things are; consent and leave thy session in the wagon.

Clyt. I have no leisure to be wasting time outside here! The cattle are already standing before the central hearth [1] for slaughter, as a thank-offering for this unlooked-for boon: so if you mean to take any part in the performance, make no tarrying; or if you cannot understand, and do not take the meaning of my words, then in lieu of speech you may e'en make a sign with your outlandish hand.

Elder. The lady appears to stand in need of an interpreter; her bearing is like that of a wild creature newly captured.

Clyt. In sooth, she is mad, and governed by some misguided mood, when she hath come from a city newly captured and yet cannot learn to bear the bridle until she hath foamed off her fiery spirit in blood. However, I'll not waste more words upon her to be so disdained. [*Exit.*

Elder. But I, because I pity her, will not be angry. Come, sad lady, leave this carriage empty; yield to necessity and take this hard new yoke upon thee.

Cass. O woe, woe, woe! Apollo, O Apollo!

Elder. What means this '*woe, woe*'! in Apollo's case? He is not of a nature to have mourners for him.

Cass. O woe, woe, woe! Apollo, O Apollo!

Elder. There again, calling upon the bright god with dolorous cries, when his presence belongs by no means to a scene of lamentation.

[1] *πάρος* for MS. *πυρός*. *Class. Rev.* 1903, p. 287.

Cass. Apollo, Apollo! God of Ways, Apollo mine indeed! For thou hast proved thy name upon me with a verity the second time!

Elder. She is going to prophesy, it seems, about her own misfortunes; the divinity remains in the mind still though it be enslaved.

Cass. Apollo, Apollo! God of Ways, Apollo mine indeed! What way is this thou hast brought me on, what dwelling! 1070

Elder. The Atreidae's: if you do not understand that, let me inform you; and you will not find it false.

Cass. Nay, it is abhorred of Heaven, privy to many horrible secrets of kindred murder and butchery, a man-shambles . . . . sprinkling.[1]

Elder. The lady seems to have a keen scent; and she is hunting on a track where she will find killing.

Cass. Yes, there is the evidence I put my trust in! 1080 Yonder behold infants wailing slaughter and roast. Flesh eaten by a father!

Elder. We had heard of your fame in divination,[2] but we are not in search of any soothsayers.

Cass. O God, what is this plot! This huge calamity plotted in the house, past love's endurance and past remedy, while succouring strength stands far aloof. 1090

Elder. I have no knowledge of these divinations; but I guessed the former, because the whole city rings with them.

[1] πολλὰ συνίστορα
αὐτόφονα κακὰ καὶ ἄρταμα (or ἀρταμάς).

For καὶ πεδορραντήριον Dr Verrall would read παιδιορραντήριον 'a place for sprinkling (with the blood of) babes.' παιδίον is not elsewhere used in Tragedy, but the sense suits admirably if it can be got out of the word.

[2] τὸ μὲν κλέος σου μαντικὸν πεπυσμένοι
ἦμεν.

Cass. O wretch, wilt thou do that? Thy wedded husband, after giving him his cleansing bath—how shall I declare the end? 'Twill be done presently—hand after hand stretched out and straining hither.

Elder. Still dark to me; it was riddles before; now it is obscure blind oracles that perplex me.

Cass. (*shrieking*). Oh, oh, what is this that comes in view? Is it some hellish net? But she is a snare that shares the bed, that shares the guilt of murder. The insatiate Pack that haunts the race may lift their shout of triumph over the abominable sacrifice![1]

Elder. What Avenging Spirit is this you summon to lift up her voice upon this house! The words take the light from my countenance: back to my heart in saffron colour[2] run the drops, even such as in men fallen by a mortal wound are seen at the same moment with the setting rays of life,[3] when the fatal end comes quickly.

Cass. Ah, ware, ware! Keep clear of the Cow! The Bull in raiment she has caught and with a black-horned engine smites![4] He falls in a vessel of water.—This is the story of a treacherous murdering caldron.

Elder. I cannot boast to be a perfect judge of oracles, but this looks like something wrong.—But from oracles what good message ever issues? Terms of evil are the means

[1] λευσίμου, 'stonable,' 'deserving stoning' (that is, 'lynching'), as καταλεύσιμος, ἀράσιμος, μαστιγώσιμος. See *vv.* 1409, 1413.

[2] Yellow or green being the hue of pallor in a Greek.

[3] ἅτε καὶ δορὶ πτωσίμοις ξυνανύτει (whose arrival synchronises, coincides) βίου δύντος αὐγαῖς, the very pallor that is seen in wounded men when life is ending in a yellow sunset.

[4] ἄπεχε τᾶς βοός·
τὸν ταῦρον ἐν πέπλοισιν
μελάγκερῳ λαβοῦσα μηχανήματι
τύπτει.

by which the wordy arts convey their lesson of prophetic fear.[1]

Cass. Ay me, the sorrow of my miserable doom—for I crown the cup of lamentation with my own fate that I must suffer [2]—ah, whither hast thou brought me here, for nothing but to share in death, what else? 1130

Elder. Thou art frenzied, heaven-transported, waiting for thine own misfortunes in wild strain like some brown nightingale unsatisfied with crying, in unhappiness of soul with '*Itys*,' '*Itys*,' plaining for a life [3] luxuriant in misery. 1140

Cass. Oh fate of the melodious nightingale! The gods surrounded her with a winged shape and sweet existence save for lamentation;[4] but in store for me is cleaving with a two-edged weapon!

Elder. Whence do these heaven-transported and unmeaning pangs come rushing on thee? Wherefore shape 1150 in song these tales of terror with a loud ill-omened crying, and withal in high-uplifted strain? Whence are the limits that define the path of thy ill-uttering inspiration?

Cass. O wedding, wedding of Paris the destruction of his

[1] From Soph. *Trach.* 1131, τέρας τοι διὰ κακῶν ἐθέσπισας, this would appear to be an allusion to some proverbial phrase.

[2] —τὸ γὰρ ἐμὸν θροῶ πάθος ἐπεγχύδαν,—as χύδην, καταχύδην. Adverbs of this form were usually explained by participles, and the MS. here has substituted ἐπεγχέασα.

[3] Or, 'bewailing Ityn, Ityn, through a life flourishing with sorrow.'

[4] περέβαλον γέ οἱ
πτεροφόρον δέμας
θεοὶ γλυκύν τ' αἰῶνα κλαυμάτων ἄτερ.

'A sweet life except for lamentation,' otherwise the conditions are all pleasant. I have never been able to see that κλαυμάτων ἄτερ can have any other meaning here than this which Schneidewin also had suggested: the nightingale in Greek poetry from the earliest to the latest was the type of unconsolable lamentation. ἄτερ, like ἄνευ, and many other words meaning 'without,' 'apart from,' is used elsewhere in the sense 'except.'

kin! Alas my native stream Scamander! Once did I wax on nurture from thee by thy shores; but now I am like presently to chant my oracle beside Cocytus and the banks of Acheron.

Elder. What is this saying thou hast uttered all too plain? A child could understand. I am smitten as by a deadly creature's bite at the sore agony of thy piteous plaining, shattering my heart to hear.

Cass. O labour, labour of my country utterly destroyed! Alas my father's sacrifices for his walls,[1] so prodigal in slaughter of the grazing herds—yet they availed not for any cure to save my country from her present plight, while I with fevered brain shall presently draw nigh unto the net spread out.[2]

Elder. This utterance follows in the same strain as the last; there is some malignant Spirit that falling with a heavy swoop upon thee causes thee to voice in music sufferings with a burden of mourning and death; and the end I cannot see.

Cass. Now shall my oracle be no more looking from behind a veil dimly like a newly-wedded bride, but is like to come upon me rushing like a bright clear wind[3] blowing

[1] Or 'before his walls.'

[2] τὸ μὴ οὐκ ἔχειν πόλιν μὲν ὥσπερ οὖν ἔχει,
ἐγὼ δὲ θερμόνους τάχ' ἐμπελῶ βόλῳ.

The correction of the first line I think certain; and in the second I believe that ἐμπελῶ βόλῳ (for ἐμπέδω βαλῶ) is the truth; it exactly describes what she does in *v.* 1290 *sqq.* For the metaphor, see the oracle in Hdt. i. 62, Opp. *Hal.* 3. 465, *Cyn.* 4. 141, Eur. *Bacch.* 838, *Rhes.* 721, Herodas 7. 75.

[3] The metaphor shifts by means of the word λαμπρός, which covers the meaning 'fresh' applied to wind. As πνεῖν and πνεῦμα, *spiritus*, meant not only *wind* but *inspiration*, the spirit of prophecy is spoken of in terms belonging to a rushing mighty wind, and the metaphor is here developed into a characteristic Æschylean figure: *Class. Rev.* 1902, p. 437.

ἐν μέρει δ' ἀπέπτυσαν εὐνὰς ἀδελφοῦ τῷ πατοῦντι δυσμενεῖς: the

towards the sunrise, so as to wash up against the eastern light a horror, like a billow, huger far. I will instruct you now no more in riddles. Come keep pace with me and bear me witness while I scent out the traces of the acts done long ago.

This House here is for ever haunted by a Quire, harmonious, but not melodious, for their language is not good to hear.

Ay and well drunk, to be more bold and insolent, with human blood, it is a revelling troop that stays within the house, hard to expel, of kindred Furies. They besiege the chambers, chanting for their chant original deadly Sin; and in turn they sicken with abhorrence at a brother's marriage-bed, with bitter enmity against the violator.—Have I missed my aim or brought my quarry down?[1] Come, with an oath attest that I do know the long and sinful history of this house!

Elder. Why, how should an oath's plight,[2] though genuinely plighted, be medicinal? But I marvel at thee, though bred up over-seas, to speak as accurately of a foreign land as though thou hadst been present.

Cass. It was the Seer Apollo that put me in possession of this office.

Elder. Though divine, being smitten with desire?

Cass. Hitherto I was ashamed to tell of this.

Elder. Ay, we are all more nice and delicate in prosperous times.

words admit of various constructions. δυσμενεῖς may be either nominative or accusative (belonging to εὐνάς); or we might take ἀπέπτυσαν absolutely and understand the rest to mean δυσμενεῖς τῷ εὐνὰς ἀδελφοῦ πατοῦντι.

[1] ἢ θηρῶ τι, τοξότης τις ὥς; Greek often adds to metaphors such phrases as ὥστε τοξότης, ναυτίλων δίκην, which we should not express.

[2] ὅρκου πῆγμα: Eur. *I.A.* 395 τοὺς κακῶς παγέντας ὅρκους καὶ κατηναγκασμένους.

Cass. O but he contended for me strenuously, with ardent favour in his heart towards me.

Elder. Came you in due course to the act of child-getting?

Cass. I consented with Loxias and then broke my promise.

Elder. Being already captured by the gift of divination?

Cass. Already I foretold my people all the fortunes they should suffer.

Elder. How comes it, then, you were uninjured by the wrath of Loxias? 1210

Cass. After that offence I found no credit for my words with any one.

Elder. Well, thy divinations appear credible to *us*.

Cass. (*moaning*). Oh, oh, horror . . . . Again comes over me the fearful labour of clear vision, working and troubling me with (agony at the) outset.[1]—See there yonder, seated against the house, young forms, like phantom-shapes of dream . . . . Children, slain as it were by their own kindred . . . . their hands filled with flesh, familiar meat . . . . ay, they show plain, holding their vitals with their other inward parts, a lamentable dish, whereof the father tasted! 1220

For this I tell you that revenge is plotted by a craven Lion that tumbles in the bed, to keep it safe, no doubt,[2] for the returning master—my master, for the yoke of slavery must be endured. Captain of the fleet and ravager of Ilium, he knows not, after all the fair and lengthened speeches uttered blandly by the lewd hound's tongue, what work she means to bring, like treacherous Ate, to accurst accomplishment![3]

[1] *παράσσων φροιμίοις* . . . . an adjective has been lost.

[2] *οἶμαι credo.*

[3] The MS. is correct, except that we must read *λέξασα κἀκτείνασα*

Such desperate wickedness! The female is the slayer of the male. What loathsome monster may I call her? Amphisbaena? or a *Scylla*, *housed* in the rocks for *sailors'* ruin?—that mother raging with Hell's bacchanal frenzy,[1] war relentless in her heart against her own. The criminal, and how she raised her jubilant cry of triumph as at the foe's rout, and in the safe home-coming feigns to rejoice! 1230

Herein, whether you credit me or not, it is all one: what is to be will come; and you shall soon be present and with pity call me all too true a prophet. 1240

Elder. Thyestes' feast upon his children's flesh I understand and shudder; fear is upon to hear such absolute verity beyond all counterfeit: but at the rest I heard I run quite off the track.

Cass. You shall behold the death of Agamemnon.

Elder. Hush, unhappy lady, calm thy profane lips.

Cass. Nay, it is no *Healer* whose influence is present in the thing I tell of.

Elder. Not if it is to be; but Heaven avert it!

Cass. While you stand praying, they are busy there to slay.

Elder. By what man's hand is this crime to be brought about? 1250

Cass. O then you are indeed thrown wide from the track of what I prophesy![2]

(Plat. *Prot.* 329A ὥσπερ τὰ χαλκία πληγέντα μακρὸν ἠχεῖ καὶ ἀποτείνει): οἷα is understood with λέξασα as well as with τεύξεται as though it were οἷα λέξασα οἷα τεύξεται.

[1] θύουσαν Ἄιδου μητέρα, a mother acting like a Ἄιδου θυιάδα or Ἄιδου βάκχον, as was rightly understood by Conington. So Ἄιδου δίκτυον 1103, Eur. *Cycl.* 393 τῷ θεοστυγεῖ Ἄιδου μαγείρῳ, Aristias *fr.* 3, μαζαγρέτας Ἄιδου τραπεζεύς, etc., hellish, hell's own, devilish, deadly.

[2] When you say 'by what *man's* hand.'—The right reading is παρεκόπης: she refers to the confession ἐκ δρόμου πεσὼν τρέχω in 7,

Elder. Because I cannot see the means whereby the doer should accomplish it.

Cass. And yet I am instructed in the tongue of Hellas, only too well.

Elder. Why, so are the Pythian oracles,[1] but they are hard enough for all that.

Cass. Oh the burning fire coming over me, O Apollo Lyceus,[2] O! [*moaning*] Yonder two-footed Lioness, sleeping with a Wolf in the absence of the noble Lion, will take my miserable life: as though it were a poisonous draught she were compounding, (vows that) she will make *my* wages an ingredient in the rancorous brew,—while sharpening her blade for man (vows) to take bloody vengeance for my bringing-here.[3] 1260

Why then do I keep these trappings to be my own mockery—these robes and wands and fillets of divination round my neck? You at least, I will destroy before my hour. [*Here perhaps she breaks her golden wand; at least she flings it from her with the fillets and perhaps her gold-embroidered robe and probably tramples on them.*]

Lie there; go to perdition; thus I'll requite you.[4] Find some other to enrich with doom instead of me.

Why, it is Apollo himself stripping me of my prophetic raiment—yes, after surveying me even in these vestments,

1244. ἀποκοπῆναι τῶν ἰχνῶν was used in the same way of hounds being thrown off the trail: Bekk. *Anecd.* 418. 25 ἀποκοπῆναι τῶν ἰχνῶν τὴν κύνα λέγουσιν ὅταν μηκέτι εὑρίσκῃ τὰ ἴχνη.

[1] "Ελλην' ἐπίσταται φάτιν is understood.

[2] Apollo in his character of Destroyer, as 'Wolf-slayer.'

[3] The construction of the sentence is uncertain. ἐπεύχεται ἀντιτίσασθαι would be 'prays to . . . . ,' ἐπεύχεται ἀντιτίσεσθαι 'vows that she will . . . .'

[4] If the reading is τῷδ' ἀμείψομαι or πεσόντα θ' ὧδ' ἀμείψομαι: but many think it should be ἐγὼ δ' ἅμ' ἕψομαι, 'I shall follow.'

laughed to scorn, had in derision by friends and foes alike without distinction.—I had to endure, like a wandering mountebank,[1] being called *beggar*, *poor wretch*, *starveling*—so now the Seer, after making me a seer too, hath brought me to this deadly pass: instead of my father's altar[2] there is here in store for me a block reddened with the hot blood from my severed neck.[3]

Yet shall our dying not be unavenged of Heaven; for there shall come another to be champion of us, born to slay his mother and avenge his sire; an exile banished and estranged, he shall return to put the crown upon the fatal doings of his House. There is a solemn oath sworn by the Gods that the father's outstretched body shall draw him hither.

Why then do I wail thus and complain? Once having seen my town of Ilium in her present plight, while's Ilium's captors, under the judgment of high Heaven, come off thus—I will go (and fare likewise) and endure my death.[4] [*She goes up to the palace-gates.*] Ye Gates of Death, I greet you; and I pray to get a mortal stroke, that my life-blood may flow easily and I may close these eyes without a struggle.

Elder. Lady of many sorrows and much wise knowledge, thy words have been lengthened:—but if thou art verily aware of thine own doom, how comes it that thou steppest with as calm a courage as an ox upon his heaven-destined path towards the altar?

[1] Punctuating καλουμένη δέ, φοιτὰς ὡς ἀγύρτρια, ...

[2] The altar of Ζεὺς Ἑρκεῖος at which Priam was slain.

[3] Reading θερμῷ κοπείσης φοίνιον προσφάγματι, her second-sight prefiguring the block already red with blood: compare the vision of Theoclymenus in Hom. *ν.* 348–357. θερμὸν κοπέντος φοινίῳ προσφάγματι would mean 'smoking with the bloody sacrifice of Agamemnon.'

[4] Seneca *Agam.* 1004–11. πράξω is doubtful.

Cass. There is no avoidance; . . . .[1]

Elder. Nay, but the latest in time hath the pre-eminence.

Cass. The day is come: I have little to gain by flight.

Elder. Well, thou art indeed a patient sufferer with a brave heart.

Cass. That is a commendation never heard by those of happy fortune.

Elder. Well, there is a comfort in a noble death.

Cass. O alas for thee, my father, and thy noble children!

(*In entering the palace she suddenly recoils.*)

Elder. What is the matter? what terror makes thee start away?

Cass. Faugh, faugh!

Elder. Why 'faugh, faugh'? Unless it be some inward horror.

Cass. The house is filled with a scent of dripping blood!

Elder. Nay, nay: this is only the smell of sacrifices at the hearth.

Cass. It is such a reek as issues from a tomb.

Elder. No Syrian odour, truly, that you give the house!

Cass. Well, I will go in, to wail there too for my own and Agamemnon's fate:—my days must be sufficient for me.

O sirs, I am not misdoubting in mere idle terror like a bird that dreads a bush! Confirm my words when I am dead, upon the day when for my dying dies another woman, and for a man ill-mated falls another man: I crave this witness of you as at the point of death.

Elder. Poor sufferer, for thy foreshown fate I pity thee!

Cass. I wish to speak yet once again a speech—or rather my own dirge:—I pray unto the Sun, before his latest light,

[1] οὐκ ἔστ' ἄλυξις, οὔ, ξένοι, χρόνῳ πλέω MS.

that to my champions, when they arise, my enemies may pay the like for a slave's death, an easy victim.[1]

Elder. Alas for the state of Man! When faring well, the pleasure of it is but as it were the pleasure of a *shadow*; should it fare unhappily,—the picture clean dashed out with a sweep of a wet sponge! And for this latter case I feel far greater pity.[2]

[1] τοῖ ἐμοῖς τιμαόροις
ἐχθροὺς φανεῖσιν τοὺς ἐμοὺς τίνειν ὁμοῦ
δούλης θανούσης

or τοῖς ἐμοῖς τιμαόροις
ἐχθροὺς φόνευσιν τοὺς ἐμοὺς τίνειν ὁμοῦ

'that my enemies may pay for the slaying of a murdered slave,' though φόνευσις would be a strange word for tragedy to use.

[2] I have no doubt that the true reading is

ἰὼ βρότεια πράγματ'· εὐτυχοῦντα μὲν
σκιά τις ἂν τέρψειεν· εἰ δὲ δυστυχοῖ,
βολαῖς ὑγρώσσων σπόγγος ὤλεσεν γραφήν.

It is an Æschylean figure developed out of the phrase σκιὰ τὰ θνητῶν (Nauck *Trag. Frag.* p. 783, *Medea* 1213, *Ajax* 125, *Aves* 683, etc.), '*All is Vanity*,' empty and unsubstantial, and not real or solid: 'every man at his best state is altogether vanity,' *Psalms* 39. 5, Soph. *O. T.* 1185. Æschylus makes his 'shadow' that of σκιαγραφία, as Iamblichus *Protrept.* 8: . . . . εἰ θεωρήσειεν ὑπ' αὐγὰς τὸν ἀνθρωπινον βίον· εὑρήσει γὰρ τὰ δοκοῦντα εἶναι μεγάλα τοῖς ἀνθρωποις πάντα ὄντα σκιαγραφίαν κτέ. Pleasure of this life (τὸ τερπνόν) is short-lived and faint like a deceptive imitation: Xen. *Symp.* 4. 22, ἡ μὲν αὐτοῦ ὄψις εὐφραίνειν δύναται, ἡ δὲ τοῦ εἰδώλου τέρψιν μὲν οὐ παρέχει πόθον δὲ ἐμποιεῖ: cf. Ar. *Poet.* p 1430[b] 1, Stob. *Flor.* 14. 24. This train of thought led Greeks to the conclusion μὴ φῦναι ἄριστον, and the chorus in Soph. *O. C.* 1211 sqq. is only a versification of an ancient and familiar commonplace. There we have τὰ τέρποντα δ' οὐκ ἂν ἴδοις ὅπου, and in Pind. *P.* 8. 88 ἐπάμεροι· τί δέ τις, τί δ' οὔ τις; σκιᾶς ὄναρ ἄνθρωπος (an hyperbole like εἴδωλον σκιᾶς, καπνοῦ σκιά) is led up to by the reflection ἐν δ' ὀλίγῳ τὸ τερπνὸν αὔξεται, οὕτω δὲ καὶ πίτνει χαμαί, Pleasure is like the grass that withereth and the flower that fadeth; τοῖς ἴκελοι πήχυιον ἐπὶ χρόνον ἄνθεσιν ἥβης τερπόμεθα, Mimnermus says.

εὐτυχοῦντα μέν applies to Agamemnon's fortunes, εἰ δὲ δυστυχοῖ to Cassandra's: κυριώτερα δ' ἐν οἴκτῳ τὰ τῆς Κασάνδρας, says Philostratus

Chorus. With all mankind Prosperity is insatiable; even from finger-pointed[1] palaces no one warns her away and bars from entrance with the saying 'Thou shalt no more enter.'[1] Here is a man now to whom the blessed Gods have granted the defeat of Priam's town; and he returns home safe, honoured of heaven: but if he is now to pay the price for others' bloodshedding before him and with his own death to complete in recompense the tale of others that have died, who can boast to have been born with an unharmful destiny,[2] on hearing this? 1330 1340

Agamemnon, within the palace. Oh, I am hurt within here, wounded mortally!

Elder. Hush, who is that crying out 'a hurt' with a mortal wound!

Agam. Oh, and again! a second blow!

Elder. To judge by the king's groans, the deed appears to have been done. Come, let us take safe counsel together as we may best contrive.[3]

(*The twelve Elders fall into a debate.*)

1*st Elder.* I give you my opinion; sound a summons to the citizens to bring rescue to the palace hither.

Imag. Κασάνδρα, and that is what Æschylus takes care to stress. But it is hardly for Cassandra to pronounce that her own case is far more pitiable than Agamemnon's; and I think with Weil that this final comment is, as usual, by the chorus: vaticinatur Cassandra, non philosophatur.

[1] That is, 'admired and gorgeous palaces,' show-places.

ἐπικρανεῖ MS., and the future is the natural tense here, but it is hardly credible that it could be scanned ἐπικρᾰνεῖ, and a paroemiac at this point is unusual. Perhaps ἐπικράνειεν 'should be complete . . . .'

[2] τίς ἂν <ἐξ> εὐξαιτο Schneidewin. τίς ἂν <οὐκ> εὔξαιτο would mean 'who would not pray to have been born with a low and harmless star?'

[3] ἀλλὰ κοινωσώμεθ' εὖ πως ἀσφαλῆ βουλεύματα.

2nd Elder. And I say, break in at once and put the matter to the proof with the sword drawn.[1]

3rd Elder. I take much the same view, and I vote for *acting* somehow; it is no moment for deliberation.

4th Elder. 'Tis palpable; their opening gives sign of tyranny in the act.

5th Elder. Because we are dallying! while they spurn the lauded name, *Deliberation*, in the dust and are awake and active.

6th Elder. I cannot tell what *counsel* I should hit upon to give: it is to the *doer* that belongs the counsel about the doing.

7th Elder. I am of the same opinion, for I know no way of raising up the dead again with *words*.

8th Elder. Even to prolong our lives, shall we bow down under the mastery of these dishonourers of the house?

9th Elder. It is not to be borne; it were better die at once; death is a milder lot than tyranny.

10th Elder. Shall we indeed divine the king as having perished merely upon the evidence of *groans*?

11th Elder. We should be well assured before we indulge anger: conjecture and sure knowledge are two different things.

12th, the leader, summing up. That is the course I am swayed by a majority on all sides to approve,—to assure ourselves with certainty about the king's condition.

(*The scene opens and discloses Clytemnestra standing over the two bodies, Agamemnon in the baths and by his side Cassandra.*)

Clyt. After many speeches made with politic discretion heretofore, I shall not be ashamed now to declare the

[1] σὺν νεορρύτῳ ξίφει, *i.e.* νεοσπαδεῖ, κολεοῦ ἐρυστῷ.

contrary. How else, when carrying out a scheme of hate, against a hated enemy, supposed to be a dear friend[1]—how else fence the toils of harm to a height beyond overleaping? This for me was only the deciding crisis of a long-standing feud, long contemplated, and though it has taken time, arrived at last! I stand here with the fact accomplished, where I struck. And I so contrived—I'll not deny it—that he should neither escape his doom nor defend himself against it: I cast around him, like a net for fish, a blind enwrapment without opening—deadly wealth of robe!—and struck him twice; and with two groans he let his limbs give way; and then when he was fallen down, I added a third blow for a prayer-offering to the *nether* Zeus Safe-keeper[2]—of the dead. With that he lay quiet, gasping out his own life; and in blasting forth the eager jets of blood he drenched me with a crimson shower of gory dew, while I rejoiced as much as corn rejoices in the balm of heaven at the birthtime of the ear.

The case then standing thus, my Argive elders, you may find gladness here as best you may; but I exult! Yea, had it been possible to pour libations of the fitting nature on the corpse, that had been justly done, yea, more than justly:[3] a

[1] φίλοις δοκοῦσιν εἶναι 'passing as beloved,' and therefore to be treated with dissimulation.

[2] τρίτην ἐπενδίδωμι, τοῦ κατὰ χθονὸς
Διὸς νεκρῶν Σωτῆρος εὐκταίαν χάριν.

The third libation was offered to Ζεὺς Σωτήρ: Æsch. *fr.* 55 τρίτον Διὸς Σωτῆρος εὐκταίαν λίβα.

[3] εἰ δ' ἦν πρεπόντων ὥστ' ἐπισπένδειν νεκρῷ,
τάδ' ἂν δικαίως ἦν, ὑπερδίκως μὲν οὖν.

πρεπόντων, as v. Heusde saw, depends on ἐπισπένδειν: it is the partitive genitive common, from the nature of the case, with σπένδω (*Journal of Philology*, 1895, p. 312). The whole point lies in πρεπόντων, for of course, to pour libations on a corpse was to give him the due rite of burial; but Clytemnestra means that the *proper* libations for Agamemnon would be taken from the ἀραῖα κακά (that

bowl so full of harm and ruin did he plenish in his house, and now comes home to drain the dregs of it himself.

Elder. We are amazed at the audacity of thy tongue, to vaunt over a man thy husband in such terms.

Clyt. You make assay of me as though I were a thoughtless woman: I with undaunted courage tell you what you know,—and whether you choose to praise me or condemn me is indifferent:—this is Agamemnon, my husband, a corpse, the work of this right hand, whose workmanship was just. So stands the case. 1400

Chorus. Woman, what poisonous root of the earth hast thou tasted, or what liquor sprung from the flowing sea, to put upon thy head this sacrifice and clamour of the people's curse?[1] As thou hast flung off and shorn off, so shalt thyself be cut off from the land, the sore abomination of the people! 1410

Clyt. Your sentence *now* is banishment for me and public execration and suffering of the general curse, though you never *then* brought any objection against *him*, who no more caring than if it had been the death of a beast, with flocks abounding in a fleecy multitude, slaughtered his own child, the dearest of my womb, to charm the winds from Thrace! Was it not right to banish *him* for that polluting sin? Yet now you are advised of *my* act, you are a harsh judge. But I warn you: if you mean to menace in this fashion, understand that I am prepared, conditions equal, if you vanquish me by force, that you should be my master: but if God will 1420

is, βλαβερά) that he has himself inflicted on his own house. Such metaphors from libations are common in later Greek and Latin; *e.g.* in Achilles Tatius 3. 16 a lover about to cut his throat upon his mistress' grave says λαβὲ οὖν, Λευκίππη, τὰς πρεπούσας σοι χοὰς παρ' ἐμοῦ.

[1] τόδ' ἐπέθου θύος δημοθρόους τ' ἀράς I take to mean τόδε λεύσιμον θῦμα (*v.* 1107). Other views are that θύος here means 'frenzy,' either 'this maddened rage of thine' or 'this fury of the clamouring people.'

the contrary, then you shall have schooling, though it be late, in wisdom!

Chorus. Monstrous are thy devices and arrogant thy loud vaunting! Even as thy heart is maddening with an act of dripping blood, 'twere well that a drip of blood should show upon thine *eye*:[1] stripped of all honour and bereft of friends, thou must yet pay with a blow for a blow!

Clyt. Hear then the righteous terms of my oath too:—By Justice fully taken for my child, and Ate, and Erinys, unto whom I slew this man for sacrifice, my confident spirit sets not foot within the house of Fear! so long as fire upon my hearth is lighted by Aegisthus, a kind friend to me as heretofore.

Low lies the injurer of me, his wife, the comforter of Chryseus' daughters before Troy, and with him she, the bond-servant and auguress, the divining—concubine, the trusty bed-fellow, practised—equally in the matter of ship's benches.—But the pair have fared after their deserts: this is *his* condition; while *she*, after carolling swan-like her last dying lamentation, she, the lover of *him*, lies there; she, the trivial by-morsel to my lawful bed, hath only afforded *me* the luxury of triumph![2]

Chorus. O that some fate would quickly come to bring me without agony or lingering sick-bed the eternal and unending sleep for company,[3] now that my most kind protector is laid low, that underwent such trials in a

[1] λίπος ἐπ' ὀμμάτων αἵματος εὖ πρέπειν, the eye shows the heart (1 Samuel 16. 7, *Class. Rev.* 1903, p. 244), therefore bloody heart should have a bloody eye to match. The blood will come from public stoning.

[2] ἡ δέ τοι . . . .
κεῖται, φιλήτωρ τοῦδ', ἐμοὶ δ' ἐπήγαγεν,
εὐνῆς παροψώνημα τῆς ἐμῆς, χλιδήν.
See *Class. Rev.* 1903, p. 245, and 1900, p. 117.

[3] Reading φέρουσ' ὁμιλεῖν.

woman's cause and by a woman's hand hath lost his life.

Ay me, ay me, misguided Helen, thy sole self to waste those many, all those many lives before the walls of Troy![1]

But now in blood unpurgeable thou hast crowned thy slaughter with a victim perfect and memorable, if e'er there was one, a Dissension firmly planted in a house, for man's affliction! 1460

Clyt. Nay, be not so borne down by this as to pray for death to be your fate; nor yet divert your wrath upon Helen, to say that she was man-destroyer, she alone destroyed the lives of many Greeks and wrought a hurt unhealable.[2]

Chorus. O Spirit of Destiny, that fallest heavily upon this House and on the double line of Tantalus! That wieldest also in woman an equal-tempered instrument[3] that stabs me to the heart!—Perched like a foul carrion-bird upon the body he is glorying to chant his chant . . . .[4] 1470

Clyt. Now you have amended the sentence of your lips, in crying upon the thrice-gorged Spirit of this race: *he* is the cause that in the inward maw is fostered a blood-lapping lust with appetite renewed[5] before ever the pain of the last wound have ceased. 1480

[1] εἴ τις ἦν ποτ', ἐν δόμοις
ἔρις ἐρίδματος, ἀνδρὸς οἰζύς.

[2] ἀξύστατον ἄλγος *vulnus incompositum*; referring to their description of Helen as ἐν δόμοις ἔρις ἐρίδματος.

[3] κράτος τ' ἰσόψυχον ἐκ γυναικῶν . . . . κρατύνεις: Helen and Clytemnestra are both instruments to execute the purpose of the haunting Spirit.

[4] ἐπὶ δὲ σώματος δίκαν
κόρακος ἐχθροῦ σταθεὶς . . . .
ὕμνον ὑμνεῖν ἐπεύχεται . . . .

How the last two lines should end is doubtful.

[5] ἔρως αἱματολοιχός . . . . , πρὶν καταλῆξαι τὸ παλαιὸν ἄχος, νέος ἵχαρ 'fresh in appetite' (τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν). ἵχαρ is to ἱχανάω as μῆχαρ

Chorus. Great, verily, is the destined Fortune that your story gives the House—alas, alas, a story of ruinous fate insatiable. Ay me, ay me, by will of Zeus, the author and executor of all, for what is brought to completion without Zeus? Is there aught here that was not willed in Heaven?

O my king, my king, how shall I find tears enough for thee? How can I find words to express the love within my heart? To lie entangled in that spider-web, expiring by a wicked death! ay me, to lie in such ignoble wise, struck down with a two-edged weapon wielded in the hand of treachery.

Clyt. Avouch you this deed to be *mine*? Never conceive me even as the spouse of Agamemnon! Guised in the semblance of this dead man's wife, it is the ancient wrathful Spirit of revenge for Atreus, the grim entertainer, that hath made this man the price, crowning the sacrifice of young tender victims with a victim full-grown and complete!

Chorus. That thou art guiltless of this blood, who is there to support that plea? Go to :—though an avenging ghost of ancestry might be *accessory* :—Red slaughter in successive tides of kindred bloodshed forces his way onward to the goal—the point in his advance where he shall afford full satisfaction to the congealed stain of child-flesh killed for meat.[1]

to μηχανάω, λῶφαρ to λωφάω, μῶμαρ to μωμάομαι, λῦμαρ to λυμαίνομαι. The intestine murders in the House that follow in such swift succession are conceived as wounds made by a devouring monster, whose thirst for blood revives again before the last wound has had time to heal.

νέος ἰχώρ of the MS. would mean 'new *serum*,' a strange description of a thirst for blood! (*ἰχώρ* never even means 'blood,' much less 'bloodshed').

[1] *βιάζεται δ' ὁμοσπόροις*
ἐπιῤῥοαισιν αἱμάτων
μέλας Ἄρης ὅποι δίκαν (or *δίκας*) *προβαίνων*
πάχνᾳ κουροβόρῳ παρέξει.

The blood of the slain children of Thyestes lies congealed upon the

O my king, my king, how shall I find tears enough for thee? how can I find words to express the love within my heart? To lie entangled in that spider-web, expiring by a wicked death! ay me, to lie in such ignoble wise, struck down with a two-edged weapon wielded in the hand of treachery!

Clyt. Why, was it not, then, a treacherous blow that *he* inflicted on his House?[1] However, for his action done to my sweet branch raised up from him, lamented Iphigeneia, he is suffering now the due reward,[2] and having paid for what he first began[3] with death by the sword's edge, he need not brag in Hades!

Chorus. I find in thought no ready weapon to my hand and know not where to turn[4] while the House is falling: I

earth, demanding vengeance, τίτας φόνος πέπηγεν οὐ διαῤῥύδαν (*Cho.* 65): it is not to be washed away until sufficient blood of kindred has been shed by murder to atone for it: φόνῳ φόνον λύειν is the principle. Ἄρης πάχνᾳ κουροβόρῳ (φόνου) δίκας παρέχων, feud-murder serving as the price for bloodshed, is just like ἀρὴ ἀτολμήτων ἐκτίνουσα in *v.* 385, havoc and destruction paying the penalty for sin.

[1] She takes up their words δολίῳ μόρῳ with the retort οὐδὲ γὰρ οὗτος δολίαν ἄτην οἴκοισιν ἔθηκ'; an ellipse such as is implied here by γάρ was often explained by scholiasts, see *e.g.* scholia on *Nubes* 1366, *P. V.* 1015, *Pers.* 237, *Orest.* 794, *Androm.* 687: and the explanation was liable to be incorporated in the text, as οὐκέτι in *Rhesus* 17. So here the lines which precede οὐδὲ γάρ were a scholiast's explanation, οὔτ' ἀνελεύθερον οἶμαι θάνατον τῷδε γενέσθαι.

[2] ἀλλ' ἐμὸν ἐκ τοῦδ' ἔρνος ἀερθέν,
πολυκλαύτην Ἰφιγένειαν,
ἄξια δράσας ἄξια πάσχων

as ἄξι' ἀξίων, *digna dignis*, a common use.

[3] Or ἔρξεν 'what he wrought.'

[4] The construction is εὐπάλαμον φροντίδος μέριμναν στερηθείς, ἀμηχανῶ ὅπᾳ τράπωμαι. So Soph. *O. T.* 170 οὐδ' ἔνι φροντίδος ἔγχος ᾧ τις ἀλέξεται, Opp. *Hal.* 3, 571, οὐδέ οἱ ὅπλον ἐνὶ φρεσὶν οἷον ἄρηρεν ἐκ γενύων.

fear the crashing torrent of blood will wreck the house; it is no longer early drizzle.[1]

Yet there are other whet-stones whereon destined hurt is being whetted for the hand of Justice to another end.[2]

O Earth, O Earth, would that thou hadst received me before ever I had seen my lord laid on a silver-sided laver's pallet! Who shall bury him? Who shall sing the dirge? Wilt *thou* have the bold front to do that act,—after slaying thine own wedded man, then to perform the lamentation for him, and complete thy work with empty comfort for his soul to make amends for thy enormous deed?

And how shall funeral praises darting over the hero's grave perform their heavy office with sincerity of heart?

Clyt. That business is no concern belonging to *thee*; by *our* hand down he fell, and down lay dead; and down beneath will we entomb him,—not with wailing from his house; Iphigeneia, his daughter, as her duty is, shall meet her father at the rapid Ford of Sorrows and shall fling her arms about his neck and kiss him!

Chorus. Charge met with counter-charge; 'tis hard to judge; the spoiler spoiled, the slayer paying price! While Zeus abides upon his throne, abides the law that *the doer shall suffer*; it is ordinance. Who can expel from the House the seed of curse? The race is glued to ruin.

Clyt. On *that* pronouncement you have entered with full truth.—For my part, I am willing to swear a compact with the Spirit of the House of Pleisthenes, accepting with

[1] The phrase is based upon the word ἀσταγές or ἀστακτί 'in torrents': ἀψεκαστί might have been used in the same sense.

[2] Reading

Δίκᾳ δ' ἐπ' ἄλλο πρᾶγμα θήγεται Βλάβης
πρὸς ἄλλαις θηγάναισι μοῖρα,

and taking Βλάβης μοῖρα together: I do not know that this is right, but compare *Cho.* 643. The θηγάναι are the incentives urging Orestes to revenge.

resignation what is done, hard though it be; but asking that from henceforth he should leave this house and persecute some other race with deaths by hands of kindred: of the wealth a small portion will be fully sufficient for me,[1] if once I rid the palace of the frenzied vice of mutual slaughter.

(*Enter* AEGISTHUS, *attended by a body-guard.*)

Aegisthus. O welcome radiance of the day of justice! Now will I say the gods above do look upon the sins of earth and do avenge mankind,[2] now that I see this man here lying, to my joy, in raiment of the Furies' weaving, expiating the devices of his father's hands.

Atreus, ruling here in Argos, this man's father, dealt thus with Thyestes,—my father, to explain it clearly, and his own brother:—being questioned in his right, he banished Thyestes from the house and from the country. Poor Thyestes then returning as a suppliant at the hearth found safety for his lot so far as not to shed his life-blood on his father's land: but this was the entertainment which this man's ungodly father Atreus gave his guest, my father:—with a welcome *hearty* but scarce *kind*,[3] pretending with good cheer to celebrate a day of festival and flesh-killing, he served up to him a banquet of his children's flesh. The foot-parts and the extreme fringes of the hands (he kept apart concealed; the rest) broken small and indistinguishable (he gave him to eat) seated in a high place (?) at a separate

[1] I take the original reading to have been παν*επαρκὲς ἔμοιγ'* . . . . *Class. Rev.* 1900, p. 119.

[2] ἄγη: 'This shows you are above, you justicers, that these our nether crimes so speedily can venge.' *King Lear*, iv. 2.

[3] He plays bitterly on two words commonly applied to welcome, προθύμως δέχεσθαι, *eager, zealous, hearty*, and φιλοφρόνως or φίλως, *kind.* Effusive rather than sincere this welcome was.

table:[1] and Thyestes straightway took of it in ignorance and made a meal most ruinous,[2] as you see now, to his family. Then, upon recognising the unholy deed, he groaned and fell back vomiting up the butchery, and invoked a fearful doom upon the house of Pelops, giving a kick to the laden board together with his imprecation,[3] *So perish all the race of Pleisthenes!* 1600

That is what has led to this man lying here before your eyes; and I am marked by Justice to be the contriver of this execution. I who was the third . . . .[4] was driven into banishment with my unhappy father, being yet a

[1] This passage is mutilated and corrupt, but there can be little doubt what happened (cf. *Class. Rev.* 1897, p. 96), because the story is told elsewhere not only of Thyestes but of Tereus and of Clymenus and in Hdt. i. 119 of Harpagos, and when the details are described they are the same. The toes and fingers (and the head), which would have been recognised as human, were concealed apart (Seneca *Thyestes* 764, Hdt., Achilles Tatius v. 3 and 5) and afterwards displayed in proof (Zenob. 2. 34, Seneca 1038, Hygin. 88, Hdt., Ach. Tat., Ov. *Met.* 6. 658); the rest, including the ἔντερα and σπλάγχνα (*Agam.* 1220), was broken small (Seneca *Thyestes* 1059) and served as meat. The separate table made it easy for the fated guest alone to have the special mess (Hdt., cf. Ov. *Met.* 6. 648–50). The general shape of the sentence therefore would appear to have been something like this:

τὰ μὲν ποδήρη καὶ χέρων ἄκρους κτένας
ἔκρυπτ' ἄνευθεν, τἄλλα δ' . . . .
ἔνθρυπτ' ἄνωθεν ἀνδρακὰς κ.

Cf. Ov. *Met.* 6. 656, *ipse sedens solio Tereus sublimis avito.* The kicking of the table over is also told of Tereus by Ovid 661.

[2] Spendthrift, prodigal; usually meaning one who wastes his substance in riotous living, and applied with bitter irony to the banquet of Thyestes.

[3] Or 'in support of' the symbolic act. In that sense it has been suggested to read σύνδικον as in Pind. *O.* 9. 98.

[4] τρίτον γὰρ ὄντα μ' ἐπὶ δέκ' of the MS. is ridiculous. ἐπὶ δύ' 'in addition to two others' would make sense and may be right; but I suspect the original was τρίτην γὰρ ὄντα μ' ἐλπίδ' 'I who was my father's third last hope.'

babe in swaddling-clothes: and now that I am grown to manhood Justice has restored me. And I got at him though I was outside, by designing all the combinations of the deadly plot. Thus even death may come well to me now, when once I have seen this man within the toils of Justice.

Elder. Insulting in distress, Aegisthus, is a thing that I have no respect for. Thou avowest, then, that thou hast taken this man's life deliberately, the sole deviser of this rueful deed of blood? I tell thee, in the day of justice thine own head shall not escape, be very sure, the clamorous pelting of the people's execration!

Aeg. Thou talk so, seated at the lower oar, when the mastery of the ship is with those on the upper thwart? Your old age will discover how at such a time of life it is a grievous thing to be sent to school with wisdom as the task prescribed.[1] But prison and the pangs of hunger are the most excellent mediciners of mind for the instruction even of senility. Hast thou eyes and seest not? Kick not thus against the goad, for fear thou strike on it and suffer.

Elder. Vile woman, thou deal thus with soldiers newly come from the war—house-keeping—violating a man's bed the while—devise this death against a man and captain of an army?

Aeg. These words too will prove the ancestors of tears. The tongue you bear is just the contrary of Orpheus' tongue; for he haled all things after him by rapture of his voice; while you with silly yelps causing exasperation will be haled off yourself and made tamer by compulsion.[2]

[1] *v.* 1425.

[2] κρατηθεὶς δ' ἡμερώτερος φανῇ: Orpheus tamed (ἡμέρου) the savage breast with persuasive charm (πειθοῖ): you shall find your own savagery tamed by compulsion (βίᾳ): Ἔρωτος θεσμόν, ᾧ πεισθεὶς ἐγώ, οὔπω κρατηθείς, Nauck *Trag. frag.*, p. 728.

Elder. As though, forsooth, I should ever see you despot over Argos! when after plotting this man's murder you had not the courage to do the deed with your own hand!

Aeg. Because the beguiling clearly was the woman's part: I, as an hereditary foe, was suspect. However, by means of this man's treasure, I will endeavour to be ruler of this people, and the disobedient subject I will yoke under a heavy yoke—no corn-fed colt, I warrant you, in traces! hunger lodged with loathsome darkness shall see him quieted.

Elder. Ah, why then did your coward's heart not let you slay this man yourself, but made you take a woman—the pollution of her country and her country's gods[1]—to do the killing? O doth Orestes yet behold the light, that he may come back hither with the grace of fortune and be the overpowering executioner of this pair!

Aeg. Oh well then, if you mean to take that line in word and action, you shall soon see—What ho! my trusty men-at-arms,[2] your work lies presently before you!

Elder. What ho! let every man make ready with his sword advanced!

Aeg. Well I stand ready too with sword advanced, and do not shrink from death.

Elder. Thy death! We greet the omen of the word; we are content with such an issue!

Clyt. (*interposing*). Nay, nay, my dearest, let us do no more mischief; we have enough distress already without spilling any of our blood.[3]

[1] *Cho.* 1026.

[2] Aegisthus is attended by λοχῖται or δορυφόροι (*Cho.* 764–5, Eur. *El.* 615), the characteristic retinue of a τύραννος.

[3] πημονῆς δ' ἄλις γ' ὑπάρχει μηδὲν ἡματωμένοις. The MSS. give μηδὲν ἡματώμεθα, for which most editors read μηδὲν αἱματώμεθα, 'let us not spill any of our blood.'

Most reverend Elders, repair hence to your homes, yielding betimes to the decree of destiny before you suffer; it was fated we should act herein as we have acted.[1]

However, should there prove to be enough of this affliction, we are willing to accept it, having been smitten with 1660
such grievous fortune by the heavy talon of our Spirit of destiny.[2]

Aeg. But these men to let their tongues run rank and wanton at me in this fashion, and fling out such language at the hazard of their fate,[3] and be so lacking in wise judgment in refusing to accept their master![4]

[1] *στείχετ', αἰδοῖοι γέροντες, πρὸς δόμους, πεπρωμένοις*
πρὶν παθεῖν εἴξαντες ὥρᾳ (or *ὥραν*)· *χρὴν τάδ' ὡς ἐπράξαμεν.*
This I believe to be the true reading: *τούσδε* was a marginal note, as on Eur. *Hipp.* 1141 *πρὸς δόμους ὁρμώμενον* there is a note *τούσδε*: and *καιρόν* was a gloss on *ὥραν*. It is Clytemnestra's plea that she is the executor of Doom, 1434, 1471 sqq., 1498 sqq., *Cho.* 909. *πρὸς δόμους πεπρωμένους*, 'to your predestined houses,' is absurd.

[2] *v.* 1568–9. The metaphor has nothing to do with the spur (*πλῆκτρον*) of a fighting-cock: the phrase *βαρὺς δαίμων* (*βαρυδαιμονία*) or *βαρεῖα τύχη* was developed into the conception of a bird of prey that souses down, or swoops down, heavily: *e.g. Agam.* 1174, 1469, *Pers.* 518, *Antig.* 1272, 1346, *O. T.* 263, 1300, 1311. The same figure is made out of *βαρὺς κότος* Ζηνός in *Supp.* 654.

[3] *δαίμονος πειρᾶσθαι* here and in *Cho.* 511 means more than 'trying one's luck'; it means 'putting one's *predestined* fortune to the touch.' *ἐξιστορῆσαι μοῖραν τύχης* in *Theb.* 493 is the same thing.

[4] *σώφρονος γνώμης θ' ἁμαρτεῖν τὸν κρατοῦντ' ἀρνουμένους dominum recusantes* (Ov. *Met.* 8. 848). *γνώμης ἁμαρτεῖν* is 'to be ill-advised,' 'mistaken' (Hdt. 1. 207, *γ. χρηστῆς* 9. 79, *τῆς ἀρίστης* 3. 81); *τεύξεται φρενῶν* in 185 is the opposite, 'shall be well-advised.' 'To be well-advised or ill-advised in doing so and so' is expressed by a participle, as 183 *κλάζων τεύξεται φρενῶν*, 793 *οὐδ' εὖ πραπίδων οἴακα νέμων . . . . κομίζων*, *Bacch.* 322 *τιμῶν τε Βάκχον σωφρονεῖς*, Hdt. 7. 15 *οὐκ ἐφρόνεον εἴπας*, 1. 116 *οὐκ εὖ βουλεύεσθαί μιν ἔφη ἐπιθυμέοντα. . . .* To be metrical here, the participle must be deponent, and I know no other which will give the sense required except *ἀρνουμένους*: to deny their master is exactly what they have been doing,

Elder. It would not be like Argives to fawn upon a villain.

Aeg. Ah well, I'll have my vengeance of you yet in days hereafter! 1670

Elder. Not if Destiny direct Orestes' coming here again.

Aeg. O I know that exiles make their feed of Hope.

Elder. Enjoy your fortune and wax fat, polluting righteousness! You may at present.[1]

Aeg. You shall pay for this insolent folly in due time,[2] I warrant you!

Elder. O you may bravely strut and crow now like a cock beside his hen!

Clyt. Pay no regard to these idle yelpings; I and thou will be the masters of this house and make all good disposal.

1633, etc., and that was proverbially impolitic: Walz *Rhet.* i. 281, Soph. *El.* 394–7, 1013, 1465, 340; Eur. *fr.* 337, 93, 604; *Hec.* 402. This leads to their retort, which is the same as in Soph. *El.* 397, *P. V.* 969.

[1] *Cho.* 56, Soph. *El.* 794.

[2] χρόνῳ, Wecklein.

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